



Childcare Handbook

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Mission Statement:

At Jefferson Academy, we offer a developmentally appropriate, academically enriched, and relationship-driven early childhood program for infants through Pre-K, empowering each child to learn, grow, and thrive.

Hours of Operation:

Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 5:00pm. Please see attached schedule for listing of closed holidays.

Licensing:

Jefferson Academy is a dual licensed facility. The PA Department of Education as a Private Academic School license Preschool/Pre-K. The Childcare and School Age Program is licensed to serve sixty children by the Department of Human Services. A copy of both licenses is available for review on the bulletin board in the school foyer.

Weather Related Closings:

School closing and delays will be determined by the Director. If Jefferson Academy closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted via an Alert on Brightwheel. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

Enrollment Records:

At time of enrollment and twice a year thereafter, Jefferson Academy completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of the audit, families will be notified if any paperwork needs to be updated. If applicable, a new Childcare Agreement will also be distributed with updated tuition fees. Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physical and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well visit" appointment, please request a copy of your child's physical and most recent immunization record. Please submit them to the Director.

In addition, any time a family's information changes such as address, place of employment, custody/approved pickup, or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed.

Item Checklist Needed Before Care Begins:

- Agreement
- Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form
- Child Health Report (must be signed by physician)
- Immunization Record
- Registration Fee
- Complete student information on Brightwheel

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality is a top priority for Jefferson Academy. Personal information will not be shared for any reason without prior written consent of the individual/guardian. Messages that are sent via Brightwheel can be seen by all staff members. If there is something private you would like to share with only the Director, please send message to "Administration" via Brightwheel.

Financial Agreements:

Childcare: The Agreement form is a contract that should be carefully reviewed before signing. The contract states the days and hours your child may be at Jefferson Academy as well as the tuition amount due in advance biweekly. This contract is binding and can only be changed with approval and signatures from parents and the Director.

School Age Before/After School Program: Payments are made one month in advance, beginning on August 1st, and ending on April 1st.

2026 Childcare Weekly Tuition Rate Schelde & Policy

Age	2-4 days/week	5 days/week
Infant Room	N/A	\$65/day
Toddler Room (1yo)	\$62/day	\$58/day
Toddler Room (2yo)	\$60/day	\$56/day
Preschool (3+)- School Age	\$58/day	\$54/day

Registration Fee:

There is an initial \$200 registration fee for all childcare students and an annual fee of \$100 to be charged January 1st.

Payment Schedule:

Tuition is paid using Brightwheel or check. There is a \$25.00 late fee per day for payments not initiated by the due date. Your child cannot attend if your account is not current. Regular fees will still be charged in their absence.

Military Discount:

Military families are eligible for a 5% discount on tuition with verification (ID or DD214).

Late Pick-Up Fee:

Childcare: Jefferson Academy closes at 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Parents will be charged \$15.00 plus \$1.00 for every minute a child is present after their contracted pick-up time (this will pay for the teachers' time when they have to stay past their scheduled-out time). Teachers will record late fees for processing. If there is a late pick-up fee, parents will receive a written notice from Jefferson Academy stating the amount of the late pick-up fee. The fee will be added to your next billing cycle. If a child is more than 15 minutes past their scheduled pickup time and the teacher is unable to get in touch with the parent/guardian, teachers will begin calling the listed Emergency Contacts.

Insufficient Funds:

All payments rejected due to insufficient funds will be charged a \$35 penalty. Missed payments and late fees must be paid within one week. Repeated incidents could result in termination of services. A payment plan should be discussed with the Director if a family is having difficulty making tuition payments.

Vacation Days:

Childcare: Each family that attends Jefferson Academy full-time (5 days a week) for at least six months and is current with payments will receive 50% off the tuition rate for five (5) days of vacation per calendar year. Any vacation days not used by December 31st of each year will expire. Please provide the Director with a minimum of two weeks' notice when you wish to use

vacation days. Requests to use vacation days must be provided in writing, email, or via Brightwheel.

Extended Absence:

If a child needs to take an extended absence, such as summer break, and wishes to return to the program after a period of time, a fee of 50% of the monthly tuition must be paid each month when the child is absent in order to hold their spot. More than two consecutive weeks of non-payment and no contact with the Director could result in termination of enrollment.

Curriculum:

Each program has a Daily Schedule tailored to each age group. A Daily Schedule will be provided by your child's teacher.

Our infant and toddler room uses the **state-approved Funny Daffer Curriculum**, a research-based early childhood program designed to support children's learning through hands-on, developmentally appropriate experiences. The curriculum guides teachers in creating meaningful activities that strengthen early literacy, language development, social-emotional growth, cognitive skills, creative expression, and physical development. Families will see this curriculum reflected in weekly lesson plans, classroom environments, and the intentional learning opportunities offered to children each day.

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) activities are incorporated into the children's schedules. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the child is doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

Outdoor Play is incorporated into the daily schedule. Staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb, and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children can choose their friends and who to interact with. Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors. Teachers refer to the Child Care Weather Watch poster from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Health to determine if it is too hot or cold to play outdoors. It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). Please label all articles of clothing with your child's name. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

Nap Time:

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services requires that all children must be provided a regularly scheduled nap or resting time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest. Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to use during nap time. Parents are responsible for providing a nap mat for nap time. These items will be stored in your child's cubby; there is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration when deciding which items to bring. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name, as all class laundry is sent home weekly to be washed.

Multimedia:

The use of multimedia in our program is an extension of the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select movie, television, and computer game titles based upon weekly themes. All multimedia must have a rating of “PG” or “E” and must possess an educational theme. Children are limited to a specified amount of time per day they may use or view multimedia:

- Toddler: 20 minutes
- Preschool: 30 minutes
- School Age: 30 minutes

Weapons/Violent Play:

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Jefferson Academy. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in weapon or violent play. If a child brings a toy weapon to Jefferson Academy, the toy will be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about toy weapons. Repeated offenses could result in termination if care.

Assessments:

Jefferson Academy uses Ages and Stages, Desired Results Developmental Profile Assessment Tool (infant-pre-k) and Child Service Report (School Age) to assess students’ levels when entering the program and then ongoing throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to work with their child’s teacher to assess and meet their child’s needs. As part of our developmental screening process, an initial ASQ (Ages & Stages Questionnaire) must be completed within 45 days of enrollment for every child. This screening helps us partner with families to understand each child’s developmental strengths and areas that may benefit from additional support. Teachers review the ASQ results with families and use the information to guide lesson planning, individualized support, and ongoing developmental observations throughout the year.

Language Development Policy:

Our program is committed to creating a language-rich environment where all children develop effective communication skills. Teachers intentionally build language into every part of the day through, conversation, songs, stories, labeling objects, modeling new words, and encouraging children to express their needs, ideas, and feelings. Language development is supported during play, routines, transitions, and teacher-guided activities to promote both expressive and receptive language growth.

We recognize that many children can enter our program with different language experiences, and we value every child’s home language as an important part of who they are. Teachers support dual language learners by using simple, clear language paired with gestures, visuals, and modeling to build understanding.

Familiar words from a child’s home language may be included throughout the day, and teachers work closely with families to learn important words, comfort cues, and routines that help the child feel safe and understood. Visual supports such as picture schedules, photos, and real objects are used to strengthen comprehension and provide predictable structure. Children are encouraged to use their home language, and we celebrate bilingual development as a strength that enriches our classroom community.

To further support communication for all children, especially infants, toddlers, dual language learners, and early talkers, we use American Sign Language (ASL) as part of our daily routines. Teachers incorporate basic signs such as more, please, all done, help, eat, drink, stop, book, and simple emotion signs to help

children express themselves before they are able to use words consistently. The use of ASL promotes early communication, reduces frustration, reinforces language concepts, and supports inclusive learning for all developmental stages.

Our goal is to ensure that every child feels heard, understood, and confident as they grow into successful communicators. Families are encouraged to use the same signs and strategies at home for consistency, and teachers are always available to share resources or answer questions.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held two times per year, as well as each time your child transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

Food Policy:

At Jefferson Academy, children bring lunch from home. Snack can be from home or provided by Jefferson Academy. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. Please contact your child's teacher to find out if your child's classroom is peanut-free.

Food From Home:

Children are welcome to bring in treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we require supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. No icing that contains food coloring. Please get approval from your child's teacher before bringing any treats. Plates, napkins, etc. should be provided with the treat.

Infant/Toddler Program:

The following information is specific to the infant and toddler room: Parents must supply diapers or pull ups, wipes, diaper cream, bottles, formula, baby food, extra clothing, pacifiers, blankets, and stuffed toys for rest time. Please label all items with the child's name. Children may use pacifiers during rest time. If you are breastfeeding, please discuss with your child's teacher when your child should be fed breast milk. Breast milk must be brought in ready-to-use containers. For health reasons, we are not able to store bags of frozen milk for extended periods of time. We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before.

What to Provide:

Childcare - Clothing and Items from Home: Extra clothes, water bottle, sunscreen, small blanket for rest, travel size pillow, weather appropriate clothes.

Play Clothes:

Please send your child to Jefferson Academy in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an essential part of our planned curriculum. Children should be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities. All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the

family. Your child's teacher will request that you bring two sets (toddler) or one set (preschool & school age) change of clothing, including underwear, to be kept at school and replenished as needed. Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing. Let the teacher know whenever your child's clothing or other items cannot be located.

Items from Home:

Toddler: Jefferson Academy allows one stuffed animal or comfort item to be brought to school for nap/rest time. We ask that all items brought to Jefferson Academy from home be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival by parent. Please clearly label all belongings brought from home. Items of value, such as iPods or handheld gaming systems be left at home, due to the risk of damage or theft. Jefferson Academy is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Arrival:

Parents are required to accompany their child into the center. Parents should also speak with the teacher in the classroom, if only briefly. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher about their child's temperament that particular day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc. Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate.

Departure:

Jefferson Academy closes at 5:00pm Monday through Friday. If you will be late picking up your child (traffic, weather, etc.), please provide us with as much notice as possible. Please note that there is a late fee for arriving after 5:00pm. If someone we are not familiar with is to pick up your child, it is essential that you inform your child's teacher in advance of the pick-up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, he or she may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met him or her. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Jefferson Academy is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building. Students under the age of two are not allowed on the side playground, even if accompanied by a parent.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as the classroom as a whole. If your child will be absent, please message the center by 7:30am so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan. If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (more than three days), the center should be notified of the date the absence begins and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for a period of 5 days or more, and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

Health and Safety Policies

Illness:

Our first priority at Jefferson Academy is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100.4 (in the ear) or greater, until 24 hours symptom-free without fever-reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications) (Two instances) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chickenpox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- Hand Foot and Mouth sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling

A child who becomes ill while at Jefferson Academy will be isolated in their classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be isolated to wait for his/her parent to arrive. For this reason, we ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as soon as possible.

Jefferson Academy reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious. The Director has the final determination say in whether a child can return or not.

Notice of Exposure & Reporting Disease:

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be shared by the Director via Brightwheel. Additionally, families who are signed up for Brightwheel will receive a notification of the illness. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Director immediately. In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director will notify the Health Department. Students attending multiple facilities: If your child is sent home from another center the day prior with an illness, they are not allowed to return to our center the following day and must comply with the Health & Safety Policies. Failure to comply can result in termination of care.

Hand Washing:

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcares such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye.

Other times your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After each diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after administering medication
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Running water and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off the faucet. Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well.

Medications:

Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. Staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. A medication form must be completed for any type of diaper paste, ointment, or Vaseline, etc. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the Director. Jefferson Academy will not administer Tylenol for Fever. To administer Tylenol to a child under 2 years old Jefferson Academy will need a doctor's note with dosage and times. Medications are stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a high cabinet (non-refrigerated medications).

The Medication Authorization Form must remain with the medication at all times. Unused medications must be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at Jefferson Academy. Medications are administered only by Group Supervisors or Director. When a medication is given, the teacher will document the type of medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given.

Documentation of Accidents/Incidents:

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Jefferson Academy using an Accident/ Incident Report and Incident report on Brightwheel. The parent shall sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy may be given to the parent. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Director to be placed in the child's permanent file.

Documents of Allergies:

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan completed and signed by the child's medical professional and provided to the program by the parent or guardian. A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan posted in a visible location in the classroom. If the allergy is food-related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted in the kitchen area. All staff working in the classroom of a child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure understanding of emergency procedures should the child have an allergic reaction. All allergic reactions must be documented with a Health Incident Form.

All allergy plans and care plans must be updated at least every 6 months, and any time there is a change in the child's needs, to ensure the most accurate and up-to-date information is being followed.

Documents of Special Health Care Needs:

An Emergency Care Plan will be on file for any child with special health care needs (seizures, asthma, diabetes, severe allergies, or other medical conditions). The Emergency care plan must be completed and signed by the child's medical professional and provided to the program by the parent or guardian. A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this plan, should an emergency arise. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific health care needs.

Emergency Medical/Dental Procedure:

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Jefferson Academy staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Group Supervisor or Director will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Group Supervisor or Director until a parent arrives.
- If the child requires immediate medical attention: The staff member who witnessed the

emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.

- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.
- The Director will contact the parent(s).

Sunscreen:

All families will be required to supply sunscreen for their child/ren for outdoor activities. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen will be applied to a child.

Mandatory Child Abuse Reporters:

As childcare professionals who interact with children on a daily basis, each staff member of Jefferson Academy is a mandatory child abuse and neglect reporter and must contact the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

Tobacco Use:

Cigarettes/ Vapes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas.

Access Policy:

Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care shall not have unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio. Unrestricted access means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.

Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the Director unless he/she delegates it to the Group Supervisor due to a conflict of interest with the person. Jefferson Academy Buildings are locked at all times and only staff may open doors for visitors. If staff doesn't know the visitor they shall ask for ID or get the Director. Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is.

If a staff member is unsure about the reason, the Director is to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the "Dangerous Adult" procedure. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by a paid staff member and will not be allowed to interact with children on the premises.

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Pennsylvania sex offender registry:

- Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the

child care center.

- Shall not be on the property of the child care center without written permission from the Director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child to and from the center. The Director is not obligated to provide permission and must consult with their licensing agent first.

Affidavit Policy:

At times families may be dealing with difficult situations at home. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits for their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Jefferson Academy staff member to provide such a statement. Our program's priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. Jefferson Academy staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.

Behavior Guidance & Challenging Behaviors Policy:

Our goal is to support children as they learn to express themselves, build friendships, and manage big feelings. Challenging behaviors are a normal part of early childhood, and our approach focuses on teaching, not punishment. We use developmentally appropriate, positive strategies to help children feel safe, understood, and successful.

How We Support Children:

Teachers guide behavior by using redirection, modeling calm behavior, offering choices, teaching simple problem-solving, and encouraging children to use words, gestures, or signs to communicate their needs. Positive behaviors are consistently acknowledged and reinforced. Our goal is always to help children learn what to do, not just stop a behavior.

When Behaviors Become Persistent:

If challenging behaviors continue or begin to interfere with the child's care or the safety of others, the following steps will be followed:

- Meeting with the parent, teacher, and administration to discuss a plan of action to increase positive behavior at school and home.
- If necessary, an evaluation may be recommended. Parents will receive contact information for appropriate evaluation agencies.
- If an evaluation is recommended, the parent will have one week to make the appropriate connection and 30 days for the evaluation to take place or be scheduled.
- All documentation must be provided to the office.
- Failure to respond within these timelines may result in the child's expulsion from the program.
- Logs will be kept identifying triggers and patterns for repeated undesired behavior. these logs will be available to parents and/or evaluators upon written request.

Biting & Aggressive Behavior Policy:

Before age three, biting and other impulsive behaviors can be common. However, maintaining safety for all children are essential. If aggressive behavior or biting occurs:

- Two incidents in the same day, the child must be picked up immediately.
- A third incident in the same week, the child must be picked up immediately and remain home the following day.

All incidents will be documented and communicated to families.

We are committed to reducing suspension and expulsion. A child will never be removed from the program without:

- A documented Plan of Action
- Consistent strategies and support
- Parent partnership
- Appropriate referrals and intervention recommendations

We believe that all behavior is communication. With patience, consistency, and strong partnerships between home and school, children can develop the emotional and social skills needed to succeed.

Home and School Partnership

New Family Orientation:

Each family is strongly encouraged to schedule a time with the Director to complete a “New Family Orientation.” This orientation is a great time for parents to drop off routine care items (diapers, bottles, etc.) as well as an opportunity to participate in a portion of classroom activities with their child, familiarizing themselves with their child’s routines at Jefferson Academy. Important policies and procedures are also reviewed with the Director at this time, as well as the paperwork required for enrollment completed. Typically, “New Family Orientation” is scheduled 2 to 7 days prior to the start date.

Daily Communication:

Jefferson Academy uses Brightwheel to communicate, share photos, notes, and incidents.

Newsletters:

A monthly newsletter/calendar will be posted on the bulletin board in your child’s class. This newsletter provides you with general information and announcements about the center and the detailed weekly themes and announcements.

Room Transitions:

Your child will transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the age milestones and required criteria for that classroom. As the time for transition approaches, you will receive a letter containing information about your child’s move into his/her new classroom. Both your child’s current teacher and future

teacher are available to address any questions or concerns you may have during this process. Before the transition is complete, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher to become familiar with the classroom, daily schedule, children, and curriculum.

Transition to Kindergarten:

As children approach Pre-K graduation, we support families in preparing for a smooth and confident transition into kindergarten. This may include:

- Sharing information about kindergarten expectations and developmental readiness
- Providing families with progress updates, assessments, and sample work
- Reading books and engaging in activities about going to kindergarten
- Encouraging skills such as following routines, independence in self-help tasks, recognizing their name, and communicating needs
- Offering meetings or conferences for families to discuss the transition process and kindergarten readiness
- Collaborating with local school districts when appropriate

Our goal is to help children feel excited, capable, and prepared for the next step in their educational journey.

Transition to Self-Care (If Serving School Age Children Over Third Grade):

If your child is school-age and older than third grade, we help support the transition to self-care by:

- Encouraging independence in daily routines (snacks, organization, homework time)
- Teaching responsibility, problem-solving, and basic decision-making skills
- Providing age-appropriate conversations about safety, boundaries, and expectations
- Partnering with families to determine when a child may be ready for limited self-care
- Offering resources, checklists, and guidance to help families with this transition

This support helps older children develop confidence, responsibility, and skills needed for safe, supervised independence.

Parent Participation:

Parent participation is strongly encouraged in our program. Some possible opportunities to participate and contribute to your child's Jefferson

Academy experience:

- Eating lunch or snack with your child – please inform the teachers one day in advance
- Volunteering in your child's classroom.

Program Evaluations:

Jefferson Academy asks parents to complete a program evaluation annually. The information gathered from these anonymous surveys is used by the staff to develop goals for our center and to improve the overall quality of care at our center. A parent's point of view is different from a teacher's point of view. Therefore, parent feedback on the program evaluations is very important

to the success of our program and satisfaction of our families.

Questions/Concerns:

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved. If the concern is not resolved, the Director can be reached at (570) 909-4320 or at moscowacademypreschool@gmail.com.

Connection to Community Resources:

If a teacher or administrator becomes aware that a family may be experiencing food insecurity, financial hardship, housing instability, or any other need, our program is committed to connecting families with appropriate community resources in a respectful and confidential manner.

Teachers will notify the Director, who will then:

- Speak privately with the family to understand their needs
- Provide information about available community supports such as food pantries, clothing closets, housing resources, Early Intervention services, parenting supports, and local agencies
- Offer contact information, referrals, or direct connections when appropriate
- Follow up with the family to ensure they receive the support they need

All conversations are managed with sensitivity, discretion, and respect for family privacy. Our goal is to make sure families feel supported and know they are not alone.

Inclusion of Children with Special Needs:

Jefferson Academy is committed to the principle of inclusion and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We are committed to every child equally, regardless of their special needs, and we work to understand each child's individual needs while finding the best resources necessary to support their growth and development. We believe that including children with special needs enriches the learning experience for all children, and Jefferson Academy will make reasonable accommodations within the guidelines of the ADA.

Sharing IEPs/IFSPs:

To ensure we are meeting the individual needs of each child, parents are encouraged to share any existing IEP (Individualized Education Program) or IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) with the program. These documents help our team understand goals, accommodations, service recommendations, and supports already in place. When possible, program staff are available to attend IEP/IFSP meetings to collaborate with families and outside service providers. Our goal is to create a consistent, supportive approach across all environments.

Program Procedures and Support:

To ensure we are meeting the individual needs of each enrolled child with an identified special need, the following procedures are followed:

- Staff receive ongoing training on inclusion and special needs related to the children enrolled.
- Confidentiality of children and families is respected and always maintained.
- Children with special needs will be included and encouraged to fully participate of their abilities.
- Staff and families collaborate continually to meet each child's individual needs.
- Communication with families is ongoing and responsive to family needs.
- The physical environment is arranged to be as free of barriers as possible.
- Desired results developmental profile assessment tool is used to meet individual learning styles and developmental needs.
- An individualized special needs care plan will be created with help from the parent/guardian, the child's doctor, and Jefferson Academy to ensure all parties understand the care practices that need to be in place.
- The special needs care plan will be reviewed and updated annually, or more frequently at the request of the parent/guardian or child's doctor.

Our goal is to maintain a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful learning environment in which every child is supported and celebrated.