



Parent Handbook

**Tanner Station
1005 Tanner Ford Blvd.
Hanahan, SC 29410**

Please check website for updated handbook.

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History of Coastal Kids Academy

Coastal Kids Academy was established in 2010 by two educators who wanted to provide a safe, nurturing environment for children in their Charleston community. Emily Mendenhall and Megan Buchholz envisioned a child development center that would have an emphasis on individualized instruction, integrate technology, and incorporate art, music, and fitness daily. The team chose a 3,150 square foot building in Tanner Plantation for their first site, serving sixty-six children ages six weeks to five years-old. Since opening in May 2011, Coastal Kids Academy has expanded twice. In February 2012, we opened our Infant Suite in suite 103. In July 2012, our four year-old classroom opened.

Philosophy

This child development center is an environment with children living and learning together. Each child is provided the best possible experience for growth and development, socially, emotionally, and educationally. We want to work with each family as closely as possible to make this a positive experience for both children and their parents. Our mission is to challenge and prepare children for success in primary education through structured, research-based curriculum combined with hands-on learning opportunities and character education. We are sure each child will find Coastal Kids Academy a happy and positive atmosphere. Our purpose is to give each child as much individualized attention as possible and to encourage development to each child's fullest potential.

Hours of Operation

Coastal Kids Academy is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., except for designated holidays and scheduled closings.

Staff

Our staff is comprised of both certified and non-certified teachers. All of our staff has experience working with young children and take classes to maintain their CPR and First Aid certification as well as 15 hours of continuing education yearly.

Enrollment and Admissions Policy

Coastal Kids Academy provides an educational and developmentally appropriate experience for infants to preschool age children. Due to Coastal Kids Academy focus on academics, full time enrollment is encouraged, and mandatory for those who are three and older. If your child is currently enrolled part-time and you have not been notified, then your child's status has not changed, as of now, for the upcoming school year. Coastal Kids Academy reserves the right to examine part-time tuition placements as needed. If there is a problem with scheduling staff and/or other students because of part-time schedules, Coastal Kids Academy reserves the right to terminate part-time positions. Part-time families will have the at least two weeks notification of any changes and may choose to go full-time. Available spaces in each age group will be filled in the following manner:

1. Children of staff at Coastal Kids Academy
2. Siblings of currently enrolled children
3. Children who are on waiting list, based on date entered on waiting list.

Fees

A one-time deposit will be collected when your child begins Coastal Kids Academy. The deposit will be the cost of weekly attendance and will be applied to the last week of your child's tuition.

An annual application/registration fee in the amount of \$80 for full-time will be paid at the time an application is turned in. The fee is \$40 for part-time. The annual fee is due by August 1st.

Weekly tuition is \$170 for full-time families. Part time tuition for two days per week is \$90 per week and \$115 for three days a week. If a tuition rate increase is needed, parents will be informed at least two months prior to the increase.

Families with more than one child at Coastal Kids Academy will receive \$10 off per week for the second child for full time and \$5 off per week for part time.

Administrative Fees

Coastal Kids will apply a \$35 administrative fee for additional paperwork requested by parents. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Any paperwork that requires notarization.

Military Family Assistance packets.

Any paperwork requested from an attorney or insurance company.

A \$25 fee will be applied to any replacements documents, such as annual tax receipts.

These fees do not apply to weekly tuition receipts, copies of immunizations, copies of student files, FSA receipts, etc.

Attendance

Due to the intense and fast pace curriculum at Coastal Kids Academy, it is important for your child to attend on a regular basis. Starting with the 12-18 month old age group, drop off after 9:00 a.m. will not be allowed without a doctor's note.

Pick Up/Drop Off Procedures

Children must be accompanied by an adult during pick up and drop off.

- Use your security card to gain access to the classroom areas when picking up and dropping off your child. There is a \$25 fee for replacement cards. If your card is lost more than two days, please let the directors know so they can order you another card.
- Drop off – Assist your child in putting away his/her belongings and fill out daily record sheet. Put labeled cup in basket. Please make sure to complete the additional comments sections of daily record sheet to include any changes in behavior, pick-up changes, medical issues, sleep disturbances from the night before, change in appetite, etc. This allows all of our staff to be up to date on any possible changes. Please see the examples below:
 - *Addison is being picked up by her grandmother, Linda Moran. Please see attached note.
 - *Spencer was running a fever last night. I gave him Tylenol this morning. Please call if fever persists.
 - *Grace refused to eat her breakfast. She may need snack earlier this morning.
- Pick up – Pack up your child's belongings, pick up his/her daily record sheet, and retrieve your child's cup from the basket/cubby. On Friday, please make sure you receive bed sheet, blankets, and Friday Folder.

Scheduled Facility Closings

Coastal Kids Academy is closed on the following holidays:

*A school calendar will be sent home at the beginning of each school year with specific dates.

January – New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February – President's Day

March/April – Good Friday

May – Memorial Day

July – Independence Day

September – Labor Day

November – Thanksgiving Day and Friday after

December – Week between Christmas and New Year's Day (Tuition rates WILL NOT apply for this week and it IS NOT counted as a vacation week for families.), New Year's Eve

***Regular tuition rates will be charged regardless of the child's attendance. Regular tuition still applies for facility closings due to holidays or inclement weather. Payment is expected on the first day of attendance of the week by 6:00 p.m. Overtime rate of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for late pick-ups.

Clothing

Think of your child's comfort and provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastening. Think of messy art materials and outdoor play environment and provide clothing that is washable, sturdy, and suitable for the weather conditions. Remember it is much easier to remove an unneeded item of clothing than it is to put on something you don't have to. Feel free to come and look through our lost and found.

Children will not be allowed to play on the playground with backless shoes (flip-flops) or open-toed shoes.

Please make sure to have at least one change of weather appropriate clothing, including socks, underwear, shirt, shorts, etc. in case of an accident.
Please label all clothing items with your child's name.

Authorization to Release Policy

In order to ensure a safe and secure environment, the following procedures are strictly enforced. If you would like your child to be released to someone other than yourself, please follow the procedures below:

- Write a short signed and dated letter stating who will be picking up your child. Make sure this person is listed on the authorization form that you filled out at registration.
- The person must be at least 18 years old and aware of pick up procedures.
- The person will need to show proper identification to the director in order to pick up the child.

If there is a person who you think may try to pick up your child without permission, please make the director aware of your concern.

Late Departure

Coastal Kids Academy closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. If you are late, be prepared to pay \$1.00 in cash at the time of pick up for each additional minute. If your child is habitually picked up late, your child will be dismissed from Coastal Kids Academy.

Emergency Closing

Coastal Kids Academy will close at the discretion of the Director for emergency situations, such as weather. In the event of inclement weather or a natural disaster, you will be notified of an emergency closing through our website, email, and local news stations. If Berkeley County School District closes for inclement weather or a natural disaster, Coastal Kids Academy will also close.

Tuition Payment Policy

Childcare payment for the current week is due by 6:00 p.m. on Monday or the first day of child's attendance. A \$10 late fee will be added to the payment for each day the payment is late. Students will be dismissed from the program for habitual late payments. The payment options are as follows: cash, checks, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. There is a \$25 fee for each returned check.

Unpaid Tuition Policy

Tuition is due weekly by Monday by 6pm. If tuition is unpaid for two consecutive weeks, Coastal Kids Academy will terminate enrollment. Parents will be notified of termination in writing.

Enrollment Termination Policy

We believe children at Coastal Kids Academy should remain with us only if they will receive some benefit from our program. Therefore, we accept all children on a trial basis of one month with a provision of termination from the program with two weeks written notice. After the trial period, Coastal Kids Academy reserves the right to dismiss a child for the following reasons:

1. Consistent disruptive behavior by the child causing excessive classroom management problems for the staff.
2. Special developmental needs which the staff cannot adequately meet
3. Lack of cooperation from the parents, such as
 - a. Habitual late pick-up of a child
 - b. Failure to follow sick policy
 - c. Verbal, physical, or psychological abuse of staff, parents, or children by an adult associated with the child or the child him/herself.

Withdrawal Procedures

Two weeks written notice is required to withdraw your child from Coastal Kids Academy. Any debts owed to Coastal Kids Academy must be paid in full prior to withdrawing. Your initial deposit will be used towards your last week of enrollment.

Vacation Policy

Children are allotted two weeks of vacation time per school year (mid-August through mid-August of the following year – please see school calendar for exact dates). If a child enters CKA after January, the child will be allotted one week of vacation time (January to mid-August). Vacation time must be taken Monday through Friday. You may use two weeks' vacation consecutively. The Director must be notified two weeks in advance of taking the vacation time.

Health Regulations

Your child is required by state regulations to have a current immunization form on file. Please ask your pediatrician for a copy of DHEC immunization form prior to your child's start date. According to DHEC regulations, an expired immunization must be replaced within 30 days with a current immunization form or the child may not attend day care.

Children's Health Policy

Your child's health is an important determinant of his or her behavior, performance, and ability to learn. Coastal Kids Academy strives to maintain a healthy environment and **CANNOT** provide proper care for sick children. If your child becomes ill while at Coastal Kids Academy, you will be contacted immediately and you must pick up your child within **one hour** of being notified. Coastal Kids Academy is required to adhere to DHEC's Childcare Health regulations. Please review to the Childcare Exclusion List at the following website: www.scdhec.gov for further information. Please note that some illnesses require a doctor's note to return.

Administering Medication

If it is necessary for our staff to administer a prescription medication Coastal Kids Academy requires a note from the child's doctor. Medications must be hand delivered to the staff upon arrival and must be in the original container. Parents must complete and sign our authorization form for prescription and nonprescription medication. No first dose of medication will be administered, and only one Nebulizer treatment can be administered daily. All medication administered will be documented, including child's name, date, medication, dosage, time of dosage, and name of staff member administering medication. Parents must also authorize the child's doctor to accept calls from Coastal Kids Academy in case of a medical emergency. If a parent is unable to comply with these required procedures, the parent is more than welcome to come in and administer the medication to his or her own child. *Medical authorization forms need to be updated monthly because a child's age and weight changes may affect the dosage amount of medication.

Consumer Product Safety Recalls

Coastal Kids Academy will review the government website, www.cpse.gov, periodically to assure that no recalled items are being used. The website is provided for you to check your own items as well.

Security Policies

Your child will only be released to the people listed on his or her emergency contact list. It is the parents' responsibility to keep the emergency contact listed updated. Photo identification is required. If you have a court order regarding custody of your child, we must have a copy on file to enforce it. Please make sure we have correct information on file.

Each family will be given two security cards for our secure door. Please do not give your card to anyone. If you lose your card, the replacement card fee is \$25.

Guests are required to be accompanied and escorted by a staff member at all times. Tours of the facility will be held twice a month. Please see the website for tour dates.

Emergency plans are posted in each classroom as well as evacuation plans. Fire drills take place at least once a month.

Accidents or Incidents

In the event of an accident or incident, parents will be notified through phone call, email, or incident/accident report. An accident/incident report will be completed and signed by all parties involved. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the emergency contact information current.

Insurance

Coastal Kids Academy has an Activity Accident Policy covering each child in the event that medical attention is required after an accident or incident occurs at school. Please see the directors for individual questions.

Discipline Policy

One of our goals at Coastal Kids Academy is to teach children positive social behavior so that they can be successful and happy at school and in the community. Our approach to teaching appropriate social skills is guided by three principles, positive reinforcement, prevention, and corrective guidance.

We believe children respond and learn best from positive reinforcement and encouragement. This means children receive verbal praise, stickers, special jobs, good notes home, high-fives, etc. when they exhibit desired behaviors. This increases children self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-control. It also creates a positive learning environment for your child.

We also take preventative measures to stop undesirable behavior before it starts. Some examples of our preventative measures include the lay-out of our classrooms, balancing our scheduling to include a variety of activities, providing a consistent routine, reviewing our classroom expectations daily, and communicating with parents daily.

Children need to be taught socially appropriate and acceptable behavior, which is why we also use corrective guidance to help children meet their individual needs. Corrective guidance includes modeling appropriate behavior, ignoring inappropriate behavior while praising the desired behaviors, redirecting children to an acceptable activity, reminding children of desired behaviors, etc. Time out may be used not as a punishment but as a way to calm down, gain self-control, and talk about better choices. Children will only spend one minute per year in time-out. For example, a three-year-old will only spend three minutes in time out, while a four-year-old will spend four minutes. Corporal punishment will never be used at Coastal Kids Academy. This includes hitting, spanking, shaking the child, restricting the child by binding or tying him or her, inflicting mental or emotional pain such as humiliation, depriving a child of food or toilet use, or confining a child to an enclosed place. **Any staff member who engages in these types of behaviors will be dismissed immediately.**

If your child is sent to the office three or more times in one day, you will be called to pick up your child. We will work with parents on correcting and changing behaviors, but too much time out of his or her classroom affects your child negatively as well as the other children in the class. If behavior disruptions become a chronic problem, your child's enrollment may be terminated.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will be held twice a year for our preschool students. Parents and/or teachers may request the director(s) presence. This is a time for parents and teachers to review each child's academic and behavioral strengths and weaknesses. During the spring/summer conference, teachers will review assessment results as well what to expect for the upcoming school year.

State and Law Enforcement Regulations

South Carolina and the Department of Children and Youth Services mandate that we report any signs of abuse or neglect. If any staff member has reasonable doubt that a parent, guardian, or authorized person is not mentally or physically capable of taking custody of a child and delivering care, the staff member will contact the proper authorities. If we determine that a parent, guardian, or authorized person is not mentally or physically capable of taking custody of a child and delivering care, the staff member will contact the following people in sequence:

1. Your spouse
2. Emergency contacts listed on your child's Authorized Release Form
3. Police
4. Department of Children and Youth Services

Complaint Procedures

If you are having a problem with Coastal Kids Academy, the problem needs to be identified, discussed, and resolved by those involved as soon as possible. Coastal Kids Academy openly accepts questions, concerns, and constructive criticism. We will not tolerate disrespectful behavior or language toward any staff member or director. If a problem arises, please contact the following people in order:

1. The staff member with whom the problem is associated with
2. The classroom lead teacher
3. The Directors

Social Media

We respect the right of families whose children are in our care to use social media. However, because of the public nature of these sites, we request that families help us protect the safety and identity of children in our care, as well as our staff, by using good judgment and discretion. Please remember that no information sent over the web is totally secure and as such, if you do not wish the information made public, refrain from sending it through social media. Please err on the side of caution and direct any questions or concerns to the center's director. Please do not:

1. Disclose confidential or proprietary information about Coastal Kids Academy employees, the children and families in our care, or the Academy in general including but not limited to financial, health, or contact information.
2. Post photographs or videos of Coastal Kids, the children in our care (who are not your own), their families, or our employees without prior written permission. This includes classroom activities, parties, graduation, etc.
3. Any comment, photos, videos, or postings that breach confidentiality or bring the center into disrepute or that are deemed to be of a detrimental nature may be grounds for terminating enrollment.

Curriculum

Children learn through a variety of ways and styles. Knowing this, we have developed a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate curriculum that focuses on each area of a child's development, including emotional, social, physical, and cognitive.

We assess each child multiple times throughout the year. Our teachers use formal, as well as informal, assessment techniques to allow them to build on a child's natural strengths while providing extra time or different means of instruction in areas which need additional attention. Parent-Teacher conferences are key elements to a strong home and school bond. Formal assessments provide a progress report and a basis for ongoing parent discussions, comprehensive, developmentally appropriate curriculum to meet all of your child's needs.

Some of the programs we use include:

*Zoo-phonics®: This program promotes active learning in each child involving all the senses in fun way. It teaches the alphabet using a cast of animal characters and sounds, and a body movement that directly relates to the animal/letter, allowing children to utilize the alphabet immediately. Children learn phonemes (individual speech sounds), the alphabet, how to decode (reading) and encode (spelling and writing). This program was developed over twenty years and is used in thousands of school districts throughout the country. Lower letters are taught first since most of the written language is in lower case form. Each letter has its own character, sound, and motion. It is proven to work!

*Signing Smart: This is a sign language program designed for hearing children that uses group-orientated strategies. This enhances spoken language skills, facilitates cognitive and emotional development, and is powerful classroom management tool. As a result, you will notice a decrease in your child's frustration, aggression, and tantrums, and an increase in constructive interactions and positive affect. Research has shown that hearing children exposed to ASL signs display enhanced vocabulary, spelling, and reading skills, as well as advance literacy skills.

*Fitness: We want to promote an appreciation for healthy life-styles at Coastal Kids Academy. Therefore, we incorporate exercise and health education at a young age in order to instill a lifelong commitment to healthy living. Each day children will engage in fun, developmentally appropriate physical fitness sessions that include music and motion, parachute fitness, baby yoga, relay races, etc. A trained fitness instructor comes in once a week to work on fitness skills with children age 3 and up.

*Math Readiness: Our focus for our math curriculum includes number sense and operations, algebra, geometry and spatial sense, measurement, and data analysis and probability. While these math strands might surprise you, they are all critical lessons for a preschool math curriculum. We use stories, songs, rhymes, finger-plays, and other creative methods that make math fun for children. Our teachers ensure their math instruction includes learning more about geometrical figures and objects, measurement of length, weight, capacity, time, and temperature, use of money, graphs and charts used for data analysis and prediction, and algebraic patterns.

In addition to our curriculum program, we will also have weekly themes, which are broken down into daily topics. Our weekly themes and daily topics are the same throughout our academy. The activities, books, interactive play, arts and crafts, Smartboard lessons, etc. vary for each age-group depending on the developmental levels, interests, gross and fine motor skills, prior knowledge, etc. of the group. Schedules will be sent home monthly. Themes include Transportation, My Community, Dinosaurs, Shapes, Under the Sea, Healthy Bodies, Circus, etc. Below is a simple summation of what a regular day in our preschool rooms is like. Our daily schedule varies on age group, special events, etc. Please ask your child's teacher for a more specific schedule.

*Circle time: Review of previous day's materials, new material is presented, show and tell, weather, discussions, and calendar.

*Self-directed play: Children are given the freedom to explore the various learning activities and interest centers. These centers are changed often for the purpose of challenging the mind and body of a young child. Centers include blocks, puzzles, house-keeping, dress-up, games, etc.

*Snack One: Tuition includes two healthy snacks per day. Please see our monthly menu. Please see daily record sheet to see how much your child ate.

*Teacher-directed activity: Children will meet individually or in a small group with the teacher to work on concepts, activities, or projects. Our Spanish teacher may push in during this time as well.

*Recess One: Recess includes playground time, walks, games, music and motion, and gym activities on cold or rainy days.

*Lunch: Parents will provide a lunch for their child. Lunch may not contain any items with nuts. Milk and/or water will be provided by Coastal Kids.

*Rest: This is a time for quiet and relaxation, music, stories, and poems. Please see daily record sheet to see how long your child slept.

*Story Time: Teachers will read books related to weekly themes and daily topics. This time also includes finger plays, Smartboard lessons, puppets, songs, and poems. Once a week storyteller, Mother Goose, comes in to do interactive lessons with the children.

* Art Time: This time includes easel paintings, finger paints, watercolors, crayon drawings, cutting activities, collages, and clay. We will also have an art teacher visit twice a week for more involved projects related to our weekly themes.

*Recess Two: Recess includes playground time, walks, games, music and motion, and gym activities on cold or rainy days.

*Snack Two: Tuition includes two healthy snacks per day. Please see our monthly menu. Please see daily record sheet to see how much your child ate.

*Technology Time: This includes Smartboard lessons, individual computer time, Spanish lessons with I-Station, listening centers, digital storyboards, etc.

* Self-directed play: Children are given the freedom to explore the various learning activities and interest centers. These centers are changed often for the purpose of challenging the mind and body of a young child. Centers include blocks, puzzles, house-keeping, dress-up, games, etc.

We feel our program offers children a time to discover, explore, experiment, play, observe, listen, question, and love. Most importantly is allows children *time to be a child*.

Birthdays and Class Celebrations

We want to help children celebrate their special day with a birthday crown or badge, special seat, the “Happy Birthday” song, etc. If you would like to bring in a birthday snack, please let the teacher know the day before so we can make proper adjustments. Please do not send in party favors. If you want to pass out invitations to a birthday, please make sure to invite all the children from your child’s class. We don’t want anyone to get their feelings hurt by being left out.

Valentines Party: Valentines are exchanged among children. Teachers will send home a class list. Again, make sure to have enough for each child in the class to prevent hurt feelings. Children will also make special crafts and have a special snack.

Easter Party: Children will hunt for eggs, make special crafts, and have a special snack.

Mother’s Day and Father’s Day: Mothers and fathers are celebrated with Afternoon Tea and Snack Attacks.

Children also present parents with special crafts.

Halloween Party: This is a happy celebration at Coastal Kids Academy, a make-believe time. The children can wear costumes for our Pumpkin Parade.

Christmas Celebration: In lieu of a classroom gift exchange, children will be encouraged to bring in items for a local charity. More information will be provided by your child’s teacher. Children will also sing carols, make ornaments, drink hot coca, etc.

Prior to First Day

Before enrolling your child at Coastal Kids Academy, we encourage you and your child visit us. This allows the family to become acquainted with the staff, children, environment, and daily routine. We want your family to feel comfortable and secure about your child's daycare facility.

Each August, we’ll have an Open House for enrolled families to meet all of our staff and the other families who attend Coastal Kids Academy. This helps everyone feel more comfortable about starting a new school year.

Prior to the first day of your child's attendance, please bring the following items:

1. Updated record of immunizations
2. Fees: Tuition for the first and last week (deposit) and annual registration fees
3. Registration form completed, signed, and dated
4. An extra set of clothing, including underwear, socks, shoes, pants, shirt, etc. Please dress your child appropriately for the preschool environment as well as the weather. Label all items. Coastal Kids Academy is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

5. Items for naptime including a small sheet and blanket. All items must be labeled and put in a diaper/book bag. Bedding will be sent home each Friday to be laundered and returned on Monday. **You may bring one toy, stuffed animal, or blanket for naptime only.** Please label the item. Please do not send any other toys or books from home. If your child's class has show-and-tell day, your child's teacher will notify you with the specifics. Coastal Kids Academy is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.
6. If your child is wearing diapers, you are required to provide disposable diapers and baby wipes.
7. All bottles must be prepared at home. All jar food must be in its original container and unopened. If food is homemade, please provide food in a plastic, secure container. All bottles/lids and food containers should be labeled.
8. If your child uses a sippy cup, you are required to provide one cup each day, which will be sent home daily for cleaning. If your child drinks out of a regular cup, you are required to provide one cup each day, which will be sent home daily for cleaning. Please make sure all bottles, sippy cups, and cups have labels on the lids and base of the cup.

Any additional information will be provided by your child's classroom teacher.

Ways Parents Can Help

Here are a few ways you can help your child be successful at Coastal Kids Academy, at home, and in public:

Teach your child self-reliance by encouraging them to do things for themselves allowing them plenty of time.

Help your child attend Coastal Kids Academy regularly, except when they are ill.

Take an interest in what we're doing at school and whatever your child brings home. Listen to your child's daily experiences and discuss them with interest.

Help your child to anticipate happy experiences in relation to school.

Communicate often with your child's teachers and the directors. We really do want to hear from you!