

WELCOME

We are glad you have chosen Kids 'R' Kids #25. We understand the importance of your decision to entrust us with the care and education of your child. We are not a daycare, but rather a developmental learning center that strives to stimulate and nurture your child. In any group care setting, good policies are an important part of maintaining proper health and safety. Many of our policies are the result of our effort to ensure strict compliance with state licensing regulations. This Parent Handbook outlines some basic policies that help us to better care for your child. Please read and be familiar with these policies, and do not hesitate to ask us for clarification. It is understood that by enrolling your child in our center, you agree to abide by our policies and procedures.

PLATINUM AWARD

Our center has consistently won awards from our franchisor, Kids 'R' Kids International, as one of the quality franchise in the state of Georgia out of 49 locations. We are a Platinum Level Center, the highest level of achievement within the Kids 'R' Kids franchise system.

OUR PHILOSOPHY & THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM

Kids 'R' Kids uses the *the Creative Curriculum*, a research-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum for preschoolers. Using this framework, our teachers are able to teach in the ways that best match the way in which we know young children develop and learn.

Children learn best by doing, and *the Creative Curriculum* uses a developmental "hands-on" approach built around weekly or monthly themes. During each week we address all areas of development: social, emotional, physical (large and small motor), cognitive and language development. Lesson plans are usually prepared weekly and posted in each classroom. There is a balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. Our classrooms are set up in a learning center configuration, which allows each child to choose his/her activities in the different classroom areas. The activities in each learning center are planned by the teachers to facilitate discovery learning. Our daily schedule includes large group, small group, and individual activities as well as learning center times. The children are guided and encouraged to learn new self-help skills, think for themselves, make choices, experiment, explore, make mistakes, and have a lot of fun in the process.

Enrollment

All enrollment forms must be completed before your child may attend our school. Please inform us of any changes in addresses, work and home telephone numbers, places of employment, or individuals authorized to pick up your child.

Activities and Dismissal

By enrolling your child at Kids 'R' Kids #25, you as a parent or guardian give permission for your child to be involved in the activities and events at Kids 'R' Kids. You further understand that Kids 'R' Kids is a private school whose goal is to provide a positive, enriching preschool and after-school environment. Although rare, a situation may arise in which it becomes evident that the needs of a child cannot be met effectively by our center. A decision to dismiss a child will only happen after we feel every option has been explored. Every measure will be taken to meet the needs of the child in question, and our Director will assess each dismissal not only with regard to the individual child's needs, but also the needs of all the children served. The parent will be a central figure in the discussions regarding this issue, but the decision to dismiss a child must be left to the discretion of our Director.

Payment Policy

Tuition is due in advance each Friday for the following week. Payment in arrears for past weeks is not allowed. Monthly payments in advance (based upon the number of Mondays in a month) are accepted and encouraged. We also encourage parents to take advantage of our free weekly bank draft payment program called Tuition Express. For those parents paying weekly, if tuition is not paid by Tuesday at Noon, a \$25 late fee will be added to the balance due. If tuition is not paid by Wednesday evening, The student will not be allowed to return without payment in full. **Tuition and other fees are to be paid in full regardless of attendance, without deduction for absences of any duration or for any cause, and without substitution of other days of attendance as "make up" days.** Please understand that this is because staffing and other operational costs are incurred on the basis of fixed levels of enrollment, and because few of these costs are eliminated when the child is temporarily absent. If your tuition check returns for any reason, \$35 will be charged to your account. In the event that you do not make payments or do not give 2 weeks written notice of withdrawal, you will be given a one-time written notice of charges owed. You will then have 15 days from that notice to pay or resolve any disputes with the management of Kids 'R' Kids. You agree to pay any reasonable attorney's fees or collection agency fees with interest and court costs, as well as 2% per month from the date that payment was first due

Vacation Weeks

Each family is exempt from charges up to 2 weeks per calendar year when you take your child on vacation. Attendance during vacation weeks is not considered vacation. Attendance for one to five days counts as a full week. After two weeks absence, full tuition is charged for missed time. A vacation week is considered 5 consecutive days out of the center, again, with *advance* notice of absence so we may adjust staffing.

Center Hours

We are open Monday through Friday from 6:00am to 6:30pm. We ask that when picking up your child, you arrive by at least 6:25pm so that you may have time to gather your child's belongings and speak with your child's teacher. **We do close at 6:30pm sharp.** Your child has had a long day by this point, and so have our teachers and staff. After 6:30 pm, there is a late pick-up fee of \$1 per minute. (We must pay overtime wages to our teachers if this happens.) If you have not picked up your child by 7pm and all attempts to contact you and your emergency contacts have failed, Kids 'R' Kids will

call the Snellville Police and the GA Dept. of Family and Children Services. After repeated late pick-ups, you may be asked to find a center that better fits your needs.

Holidays

Kids 'R' Kids is a year-round preschool. We do observe the following holidays: New Year's Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; the Day After Thanksgiving; and Christmas Day. Depending upon when the days fall in the week, we will either close completely or close early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. No discount from tuition will be made for holidays or other days on which the facility does not operate or opens late (i.e. snow days, etc.).

Full Time vs. Part Time Enrollment

With the exception of our infant room, we offer both full and part time enrollment. Since we are a year round preschool, we give preference for spaces to full time children. With this in mind, we try to and generally do accommodate requests for part time schedules but ask part time parents to be as flexible as possible with the days they attend. Also, part time parents should understand that from time to time, they may be asked to change their schedules to allow for a more even daily enrollment in certain classrooms. The Director has the final say on part time schedules that are acceptable to our center.

Notifying the Center of Your Intent to Disenroll

From the date you start, **your child is considered to be enrolled in our school until we receive written notice otherwise.** A minimum two-week written notice addressed to the owner, Frank Bennett, is required prior to disenrollment (although we request 30 days if at all possible). The two weeks begins on the date we actually receive written notice and issue you a written receipt of such notice, and you are responsible for payment for those two weeks whether your child attends school or not. This notice is common among high quality preschools and allows us to notify the family of the next child on our waiting list of an opening.

Inclement Weather

In the event of unusual weather conditions such as snow or ice, there are 2 ways to find out if we are open or are opening late: 1) Check our web site www.krk25ga.com; or 3) call our center at 770-979-6767 and after about 8 rings, you will hear an updated message. Note: we do not always follow the Gwinnett County school system for snow holidays as some people might assume. Generally, we try to open late if possible rather than close for the day to give road crews time to clear the roads.

Computer Check In & Out

The primary mechanism for ensuring the security of the school is strict adherence to established procedures for your child's arrival and departure, including clocking in and out on the school computer. **We ask that you *always* check your child in and out using the computer at the front desk.** State regulations require us to know who is in the building at all times. Please do not give others (like grandparents, babysitters, etc.) your password. Rather, have them identify themselves at the front desk before picking up your child. If another person will regularly pick up your child, we will be happy to assign them their own password to use. You may use this computer to check your tuition account balance, and from time to time, you will receive other important email messages here as well.

Child Pick Up

Children can only be released to parents or legal guardians, or someone authorized in writing by these persons. Please fill out the Child Pick Up Log at our front desk to notify us if someone other than parents or authorized persons will be

picking up your child. We ask that changes to your authorized pick up list be made in writing. Anyone picking up your child may be asked for a picture ID, so please make sure that individual has such an ID available when picking up. Also, please understand that we will not deny custody of any child to that child's mother, father, or legal guardian except upon presentation of a valid custody order from a court with legal jurisdiction.

Access to Your Child's Classroom

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

Arrival and Departure

It is important that your child's day begin on a positive note. Upon arrival, make sure your child's teacher knows your child has arrived so that we may mark them present. An authorized adult must accompany a child into and out of the building. From time to time, your child may experience some separation anxiety. This is normal. Experts suggest you hug and comfort your child, let them know you are leaving and will see them later, and promptly leave the classroom. While leaving a crying child can be a difficult thing, most children stop crying within five minutes, and your lingering in the classroom most often makes matters worse. You are welcome to call or check our Internet Cameras to check on your child. At pick-up, feel free to spend time in the classroom and talk with your child's teachers about their day. Upon departure, please make sure your child's teacher knows you have picked up your child so we may mark them off the roll.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Please label all clothing with your child's first and last name. We simply cannot be responsible for lost articles. Please send children to school in play clothes. Long dresses, jellies shoes, cowboy boots, and flip-flops can be dangerous. Rubber soled or non-slippery shoes are best for school. We ask that you leave all food, gum, and toys at home. As seasons change, please send your child to school with appropriate jackets or coats. State licensing regulations require that children spend 1½ hours per day outside. So with the exception of a few extremely cold or hot days or smoggy days in summer, understand that your children will spend time outside each day. All children must go outside as we are not staffed to accommodate requests for certain children to stay inside. If a child is not well and you do not want them to go outside, they are not well enough to be at school and need to be kept at home that day.

Food / Birthdays

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

Procurement Fee for Hiring Our Teachers

Hiring of our teachers by parents is highly discouraged because it presents a conflict of interest for the teacher. If a parent does hire a teacher for a position (i.e. nanny or caregiver) that competes with the center during enrollment **or** for a period of 12 months after withdrawal from school, then the parents shall have 30 days to notify the center and pay the center a **\$2000 placement fee**, since you were introduced to the teacher by our school. Understand, this fee is common and in line with what many nanny agencies charge for placement. By enrolling in our center, you understand and agree to this policy.

Babysitting

We discourage our staff from providing child care services outside our facility, as it causes a conflict of interest. Please do not solicit their services as it is a violation of their employee agreement/policies.

Admission / Inclusion Policy

We have an open enrollment policy. Our services are offered to everyone, regardless of race, creed, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

Class Directories and Photos

From time to time, we often take pictures of children in classroom activities. Unless you instruct us otherwise in writing, you agree to allow your child's image to be posted in our center or on our center's web site.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Illnesses

Please understand that for your child's protection, the protection of our staff and other children, and to stay in compliance with state regulations governing preschools, we strictly enforce our illness policy. We kindly request your full cooperation by not bringing in sick children, and picking up a sick child within one hour when you are called to do so. **We cannot allow children with communicable diseases in the Center. A child with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea must go home.** You understand that if your child is ill, including, but not limited to a severe cough or sore throat; undetermined rash or spots, boil, congestion, non-clear runny nose, pink-eye, head lice, temperature over 100 degrees, severe headaches, upset stomach or diarrhea, **he/she cannot be accepted into the center until well or has been without fever or other symptoms for 24 hours.** In the event your child has a communicable disease, please notify the center immediately so we may notify other parents; a release form from a doctor may be required before your child re-enters the center. Kids 'R' Kids will notify parents if a communicable disease has been introduced into the center. A child who, due to a temporary health condition, cannot play outside should remain at home. For safety reasons, we are simply not staffed to watch a single child inside while the rest of the class plays outside. A child who is too sick to go outside is too sick to be at school.

Medicines

You understand that Kids 'R' Kids is not required by law to administer medicine, but with a prescription or doctors note, we may do so as an accommodation to parents. We prefer that parents give medicine at home, and that we not be asked to give medicines at our school. Should we decide to administer medicine, we will make every effort to administer medicine properly; however, you agree to hold us harmless regarding this matter. We administer medicines only twice daily, at 10am and 2pm. Our assumption is that you are administering medicines at home at 7am and 7pm if needed. If your child needs medicine more than twice daily or at another time, please consider keeping them home until they are well.

State regulations require that all medicines be: 1) in their original prescription containers or over the counter container; 2) clearly labeled with the identity of the non-expired medicine and a prescription number and /or written dosage instructions by physician; 3) the child's name must appear on the container itself. All medicines are to be signed into the Medicine Book at the front desk each week. You agree to provide the center with all necessary information pertaining to administering medicine to your child(ren).

Food and Nutrition

Meals are included in the price of your tuition. Meals include breakfast for those who arrive before 8:30am, a hot lunch, and an afternoon snack. Our meals comply with the State Minimum Nutrition Standards. We use a menu that rotates every 6 weeks and reflects the cultural and ethnic diversity of the children in our school. Menus are prepared and displayed each month so that the parents know what their child is being served. Children are encouraged to take at least one bite of each food offered; however, they are not forced to eat. For safety reasons (i.e. children with severe allergies, etc.) and behavioral reasons (it is better if all children are served the same food), no other food is allowed in the center. If you miss your child's class breakfast or lunch, we kindly ask that you please provide a meal for your child before dropping them off, and that they finish that meal before entering the school. If your child's class is finishing their meal when you drop off, you may be asked to sit with your child in our café until they have completed their meal, after which you can escort them back to their classroom.

In the case of special dietary needs as prescribed by a physician, parents must furnish the food items. Please notify the Director and your child's teacher of any food allergy your child may have, including the severity of such an allergy, and what to do in the event a child accidentally ingests such food. Understand that we will make every reasonable effort to accommodate children with food allergies, but there are limits to what can be done in a large group care setting.

Accidents Will Happen and Boo Boo Reports are written

Even in the highest quality preschools, accidents can and do happen as children explore the world around them. Whether in our care or yours, scratches, skinned knees, bumps, and bruises are a natural part of growing up. Many precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment including routine staffing over and above state mandated teacher to child ratios during most times of the day. If an incident or injury occurs, first aid is administered and a Boo Boo Report is filled out and a copy is given to you. This report will describe the nature of the incident and the follow-up care that was provided. Please understand that in a group care setting, we do witness most incidents, *but occasionally there may be an incident which we do not see*. Our teachers simply cannot be expected to see everything. There are limits to what is seen in a group care setting. If your expectation is that your child will never have any accidents while under our care and that every boo boo will be documented, then your expectations of what can be accomplished in a group care setting may be unrealistic. One on one care (i.e. a nanny) may be best for your family if these are your expectations. Please see our Director if you have any concerns about this matter.

Immunizations

We ask that your child's immunization record (Form 3231 which can be obtained from your pediatrician) be presented with enrollment forms. At the latest, it is due within 30 days of enrollment. After 30 days, we cannot continue service. This is a requirement from the Georgia Health Department and the Department of Human Resources.

Emergency Information

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

Emergency Medical Care

Should your child become ill during the time that he/she is in the care of Kids 'R' Kids or suffer an accident of any nature, the center shall undertake to contact a parent or guardian immediately and shall be authorized to secure such medical attention, transportation, and care for the child as may be necessary. (The parent shall assume responsibility for the cost of any such care). Kids 'R' Kids #25 uses Emory Eastside Hospital as its designated emergency care center. You agree to keep the center informed in writing as to changes in your telephone numbers (cell, work, home), as well as those of emergency contacts.

Biting Policy

In even the best preschool settings, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infant and toddlers, and sometimes even among preschoolers. This is an unavoidable occurrence in groups of young children. When it happens, it can be very scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and teachers. Understand that this is not an unusual phenomenon among children who are going through the oral stage of their development. It is also not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers, and there are no quick and easy solutions to it.

Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking to be noticed, or intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, and attention. Children may be teething and biting may be a pleasant sensation to a young child. Knowing that their biting will hurt another person is not yet part of a child's mindset, so the "cause-effect" relationship is not internalized. Our teachers plan activities and supervise carefully in order for biting not to happen. There are times, however, that a teacher cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.

Our policy for handling a biting incident is as follows:

- 1.) The biter is immediately removed from the group with a firm "NO". The bitten child is consoled and the bitten area washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The biter is not allowed to return to play and is talked to on a level that he/she can understand, and then redirected.
- 2.) A written incident report is given to the parents of all children involved when they are picked up that day. The name of the biting child is not released because it serves no useful purpose and can make an already difficult situation more difficult.
- 3.) We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for patterns, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
- 4.) We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- 5.) We try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress.
- 6.) We make special efforts to protect potential biting victims.

We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the biting child do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child.

Nap Time / Rest Time

Adequate rest or quiet time is a very important part of a young, growing child's day. Infants are always allowed to nap as needed but as your child graduates to one nap per day beginning in our toddler rooms, a rest period will follow lunch each day. All children one year or older are assigned their own mat and are encouraged to sleep or rest for a period of one to two hours or longer if needed depending on the individual child. Blankets and/or stuffed animals that are special to your child are encouraged to help your child feel more comfortable and secure. Children who do not nap are allowed to quietly read a book, play with puzzles or participate in other quiet activities.

Mandated Reporting Information

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

Parking Lot Safety

Please drive slowly and cautiously in our parking lot for the safety of our children and their parents. It is recommended that you hold your child's hand or carry them as you walk to your car. Please do not park in or block the Fire Lane, and be mindful of parking in front of the school and blocking other cars. If you plan to be in the school for a while, please park in a designated space to keep traffic flowing smoothly. Also, we ask that you please not park in the space reserved for our Employee of the Month as this is a special place of recognition for that employee.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Daily Reports and Lesson Plans

Each day in most classrooms, you will receive a Daily Report that has details about your child's day including how they ate, slept, played, and what they learned. For younger children, the report includes information on diaper changes. Since everything about a child's day cannot be put on paper, we encourage you to contact your child's teacher if you have any specific questions. Each classroom has weekly lesson plans posted for parent review. These lesson plans detail the classroom activities for the week.

Weekly Classroom Newsletter and Center Newsletters

In most classes, you will receive a weekly newsletter on Fridays that details the events of the past week, and explains what will be taking place in the class for the next week. Every month, we publish a newsletter to all parents describing school activities, any upcoming events, and other school news and timely information.

Parent Information Board and Parent Teacher Conferences

This bulletin board in our lobby contains current information about the school and other topics of general interest. You can expect regular, formal conferences with your child's teacher. In our infant and toddler rooms, conferences take place when your child moves up to the next room. In our preschool rooms, expect conferences each spring and fall.

Internet Cameras

Included in your tuition is access via a secure Internet Server to the cameras in your child's classroom so that you may view the activities and your child's participation in those activities. This is a very popular feature of our center, and it gives our parents peace of mind as well as allowing another way to participate in your child's day. Access to our system is limited by password protection. Parents are prohibited from giving out passwords to anyone else.

Parent Comment Box and Parent Grievance Procedure

There is a Parent Comment Box in the lobby where you can drop off any comment or suggestions you may have. Of course, we encourage you to discuss any classroom issue directly with your child's teacher or a center Director or Owner if needed. If an issue arises that cannot be addressed by your child's teacher, we ask that you notify the Director. If you still feel that your issue has not been addressed properly, please feel free to contact the Owner.

Teacher to Child Ratios

There are two teacher to child ratios observed at Kids 'R' Kids. These ratios are posted in each room. First, the state of Georgia has certain minimum ratios that are observed at all times. Second, Kids 'R' Kids has lower ratios that we strive to maintain 90 to 95% of the time, as there may be brief periods of time early in the mornings or late in the afternoons when we briefly exceed "our" lower ratios (but never exceed the state minimum ratios) as we await the arrival of the next teacher in a room where children of like ages may be combined. Essentially, our lower ratios mean there is an extra teacher in most every classroom versus what the state requires us to maintain. If you have a question about ratios and how we combine classrooms early or late in the day, please ask a Director.

Enrichment Programs

We offer several enrichment classes for children that are very popular with many of our parents. These classes are over and above our regular curriculum and are generally taught by professionals from outside our center. Parents pay these professionals a nominal monthly fee for their services. Currently, our enrichment programs are as follows:

- Spanish, Tap / Ballet, Gymnastics, Martial Arts, Cooking