Kidz Korner

LEARNING ACADEMY

Parent Handbook

Everything your family needs to know about our program

Effective October 2026

Licensed by Georgia DECAL

Quality Rated Program

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Kidz Korner
LEARNING ACADEMY

1 Welcome, Mission and Philosophy

Welcome to the Kidz Korner Learning Academy family! Thank you for trusting us with your child. This handbook explains how our center works and what you can expect from us. Please read it, keep it handy, and sign the acknowledgment page at the end.

> **Our mission.** Kidz Korner Learning Academy provides high-quality early care and education that nurtures each child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth, in close partnership with families.

Our philosophy. Children learn best through play, hands-on exploration and warm relationships with caring adults. You are your child's first and most important teacher, and we see ourselves as your partners. Each day we focus on:

- Keeping every child safe, healthy and supervised
- Building confidence, kindness and independence
- Preparing children for school with a curriculum aligned to Georgia's Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)
- Respecting every family's culture, language and values

Kidz Korner may update these policies. We will give families written notice of any changes.

2 Licensing and Quality Rated

Kidz Korner is a Child Care Learning Center licensed by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), also called Bright from the Start. DECAL sets rules for staff training, background checks, ratios, health and safety, and visits our center to check that we follow them.

Quality Rated. Kidz Korner participates in Quality Rated, Georgia's system for measuring and improving child care quality. Programs that go beyond minimum licensing earn 1, 2 or 3 stars. Ratings combine a portfolio across five standards (teacher qualifications; child health, nutrition and physical activity; family engagement; intentional teaching; and ratios) with independent classroom observations.

Family engagement is part of our rating, so we will invite you to conferences, surveys and events throughout the year. Your participation helps your child and our program.

3 Enrollment and Required Forms

Kidz Korner serves children ages 6 weeks to Pre-K. We enroll children without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability, and we make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs.

Before your child's first day, please turn in:

- Completed enrollment application with emergency contacts and authorized pickup list
- **Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231)**, completed by your child's doctor or the health department, or a valid exemption. Replace it within 30 days if it expires.
- Child health and medical information, including allergies, special diets and medications
- Signed parent agreement, tuition agreement and handbook acknowledgment
- Permissions: field trips, transportation, photos, sunscreen/insect repellent and other external preparations
- Copy of any custody or court order affecting pickup
- Infant feeding plan and safe sleep acknowledgment (infants)
- For Pre-K or school-entry children: Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening (Form 3300)

Please update us right away when your phone number, address, workplace, pickup list or child's health information changes. Records are kept confidential and shared only with you, DECAL and others allowed by law.

Getting started. We welcome a visit with your child before the first day to meet the teacher and see the classroom. A short, upbeat goodbye at drop-off helps children settle in.

4 Hours, Holidays, Tuition and Fees

Hours. Monday–Friday, 6:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.. For your child's learning, please arrive by 9:00 a.m..

Closed days. New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day before and after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and two days before and after, and teacher training days. A yearly closing calendar is given at enrollment.

Weather closings. We follow Peach County Schools for weather closings and delays and will also notify families through the Procare app.

Tuition and fees.

Item	Amount
Registration fee (non-refundable, at enrollment)	$65
Annual supply fee	$65
Infant weekly tuition	$165
Toddler / 2-year-old weekly tuition	$160
Preschool weekly tuition	$150
School-age Before & After weekly tuition	$75
Late payment fee (after Monday)	$25
Late pickup fee	$5 then an additional $2 per minute after closing

Tuition is due each Monday in advance. Tuition holds your child's space, so it is due for absences, sick days and holidays. Accounts more than 2 weeks past due may lead to suspension of care.

CAPS subsidy. Kidz Korner accepts Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) subsidy. Families must keep their CAPS case active, check their child in and out every day as required for attendance records, and pay any family fee owed to the center.

Late pickup. If you will be late, call us. If a child is still here 30 minutes after closing and we cannot reach you or anyone on the pickup list, we will contact local law enforcement and/or DFCS for help.

5 Arrival, Departure and Authorized Pickup

Arrival. An adult must walk your child into the classroom and wash their hands, sign or check them in, and make sure a teacher has greeted your child. Never leave a child at the door, in the parking lot or in a vehicle. Let the teacher know about anything that may affect your child's day (a rough night, a new medication, a change in pickup).

Departure. Sign or check your child out each day and let the teacher know you are leaving. Once you have picked up your child, you are responsible for supervising them on our property.

Authorized pickup. We release children only to a parent or an adult (18 or older) you have listed in writing.

- Anyone we do not recognize must show photo ID, every time, until staff know them.
- To add someone for one day, send a written, signed note or app message; phone calls alone are not accepted.
- Both parents have equal access to their child unless we have a copy of a court order that says otherwise.
- We will not release a child to an adult who appears impaired by alcohol or drugs. We will call another authorized adult and, if needed, law enforcement.

> **Open-door policy. Legal** Parents and guardians are welcome to visit their child's classroom at any time while their child is in care. For safety, please sign in at the front desk.

Parking lot safety. Please turn off your engine, hold your child's hand and never leave children or pets unattended in vehicles.

6 Curriculum and Daily Schedule

Our classrooms curriculum aligned with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). GELDS describe what children from birth to age 5 should know and be able to do in five areas: physical development and motor skills; social and emotional development; approaches to play and learning;

communication, language and literacy; and cognitive development (math, science, social studies and creative arts).

How we teach. Children learn through play in hands-on interest centers (blocks, dramatic play, art, books, science, math, music), small groups, read-alouds and outdoor play. Teachers plan weekly lessons around themes and each child's interests and needs. Lesson plans are posted in every classroom.

Assessment. Teachers observe and document your child's development using assessment tools and keep a portfolio of work samples. We share progress with you at conferences at least twice a year and any time you ask. If we notice a possible developmental concern, we will talk with you privately and can help connect you to free screening through Babies Can't Wait (birth to 3) or your local school district (3 and older).

Sample preschool day:

Time	Activity
6:30–8:00	Arrival, quiet centers
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
9:00–9:45	Circle time: greeting, calendar, weather
9:45–10:00	Learning centers and small groups
10:00–10:45	Outdoor play
10:45–11:00	Story, music and movement
11:00–12:00	Lunch
12:00–2:00	Rest time
2:00–2:30	Afternoon snack
2:30–3:00	Outdoor play
3:00–5:30	Centers, enrichment, departure

Infant and toddler schedules follow each child's own rhythm for eating, sleeping and play. Screen time is limited and never used during meals or rest.

7 Meals, Nutrition and Allergies

Kidz Korner serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack at no extra charge. Weekly menus are posted on the message board. Meals follow the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

- Children arriving after 9:00 a.m. should eat breakfast before arrival.
- Teachers sit with children, serve family-style when appropriate and encourage (but never force) children to try new foods.
- Food is never used as a reward or punishment.
- Water is available throughout the day.

Infants. Parents may provide formula or breast milk, or use formula provided by the center. Bottles from home must be labeled with your child's name and date. Your child's doctor guides when solid foods begin; we follow your written feeding plan. Infants are always held for bottle feeding and bottles are never propped.

Allergies and special diets. Tell us about every food allergy in writing, with a care plan signed by your child's doctor. Provide any emergency medication (such as an epinephrine auto-injector) before your child's first day. Religious or cultural diet needs are honored; please tell us in writing.

Food from home. To protect children with allergies, outside food is limited to store-bought, sealed items for celebrations. Please check with your child's teacher first. Kidz Korner is a nut-aware center.

8 Health, Illness, Medication and Safe Sleep

Keep your child home, or we will call you to pick up within 1 hour, if your child has:

Symptom	Child may return when
Fever of 100.4°F or higher with a change in behavior or other symptoms	Fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine
Vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours	24 hours after the last episode
Diarrhea that can't be contained in a diaper or toilet, or 2+ loose stools beyond normal	24 hours after the last episode
Pink eye with pus or discharge	Treatment started, or doctor's note
Rash with fever or behavior change	Doctor's note that it is not contagious
Head lice	After first treatment
Strep throat, impetigo, ringworm, scabies and similar	After 24 hours of treatment or doctor's clearance
Chickenpox, measles, flu, COVID-19 or other reportable illness	As advised by the doctor or health department

Symptom	Child may return when
Too ill to take part in activities, or needs more care than staff can give while caring for the group	Able to participate comfortably

If your child becomes ill, they will rest away from other children, under supervision, until you arrive. Please tell us within 24 hours if your child has a contagious illness so we can notify other families (without naming your child), as DECAL's Communicable Disease Chart directs.

Injuries. For minor injuries we give first aid and give you a written report at pickup. For serious injuries we call 911 first, then you.

> **Safe sleep for infants.** Following safe sleep practices to reduce the risk of SIDS, infants are placed on their backs in a crib with a firm mattress and fitted sheet only: no blankets, pillows, bumpers or toys. Infants who fall asleep elsewhere are moved to a crib. A different sleep position requires a written statement from your child's doctor. Sleep sacks are not permitted. Older children rest on individual cots or mats with a light blanket from home.

9 Behavior Guidance

We help children learn to manage feelings, solve problems and get along with others. Our teachers use positive guidance:

- Clear, simple classroom rules and predictable routines
- Specific praise for kind and helpful behavior
- Redirecting children to another activity
- Offering choices and using natural, logical consequences
- Teaching words for feelings and steps to solve conflicts
- A short, supervised "calm-down" time with a teacher nearby when a child needs to regroup

> **Never used at Kidz Korner:** spanking, hitting, shaking or any physical punishment; yelling, shaming, threats or frightening language; withholding food, rest or outdoor play; punishing toileting accidents; isolating a child out of staff view; or restraining a child.

Biting. Biting is common among toddlers. When it happens we care for the child who was bitten, calmly tell the child who bit that biting hurts, and watch for patterns. Both families are told the same day (we do not share the other child's name).

When challenges continue. If a behavior concern continues, we will:

1. Document what we observe and tell you early.
2. Meet with you to make a shared plan for home and school.
3. Seek outside support, such as DECAL's free Inclusion and Behavior Support program, or a referral for developmental screening with your permission.
4. Review progress together.

Suspension or dismissal is a last resort and is explained in Section 13.

10 Safety, Emergencies and Mandated Reporting

Qualified, screened staff. Every Kidz Korner employee has a satisfactory fingerprint-based comprehensive background check through DECAL before starting work, renewed every 5 years. Caregivers are trained in pediatric CPR and first aid, and at least one trained staff member is in every classroom with children.

Ratios. We meet or exceed Georgia's staff-to-child ratios at all times (Rule 591-1-1-.32):

Age	Staff:child ratio	Max group size
Infants (under 1, or under 18 months and not walking)	1:6	12
1-year-olds who walk	1:8	16
2-year-olds	1:10	20
3-year-olds	1:15	30
4-year-olds	1:18	36

Building security. Entry doors stay locked and are opened by Staff.

Emergencies. We have a written emergency plan for fire, severe weather, lockdown, utility failures and evacuation, and practice fire and tornado drills regularly. If we must evacuate, children will be taken to a designated relocation

site, and we will contact you through the Procare app with the location. Please do not call the center during an emergency so lines stay open; we will reach you.

Field trips and transportation. You will receive advance notice and a permission slip for every field trip. Kidz Korner provides transportation; children ride in age-appropriate car seats or restraints.

> **Reporting abuse and neglect.** Under Georgia law (O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5), all child care staff are mandated reporters. If we have reasonable cause to suspect a child has been abused or neglected, we must report it to the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) within 24 hours. We do not need a family's permission to make a report. Anyone can report concerns to DFCS at 1-855-GACHILD (1-855-422-4453).

11 What to Bring

Please label everything with your child's name.

All children:

- A complete change of weather-appropriate clothes (more for toddlers and children who are potty training)
- Comfortable play clothes that can get messy, and closed-toe shoes with backs for safe running and climbing (no flip-flops or Crocs on the playground)
- A jacket, hat or coat in cool weather; children go outside daily when weather allows
- A light blanket for rest time (sent home weekly to wash)

Infants and toddlers:

- Diapers and wipes
- Bottles, formula (center may provide) or breast milk, labeled with name and date
- Diaper cream, with signed authorization
- Pacifier (labeled), if used

Toilet training. We partner with you when your child shows signs of readiness. Please send pull-ups with side tabs and several changes of clothes. Accidents are handled calmly and never punished.

Please leave at home: toys from home (except on show-and-tell days, which teachers will announce), money, jewelry, gum, candy and anything that looks like a weapon. Kidz Korner is not responsible for lost items.

12 Communication and Family Engagement

Strong communication between home and school helps your child thrive.

- **Daily updates.** Infant and toddler families receive a daily report on meals, diapering, sleep and activities. All families receive photos, messages and reminders through the Procare app.
- **Newsletters and calendars.** A monthly newsletter shares themes, events and closing dates.
- **Conferences.** Family conferences are held at least twice a year to review your child's progress and set goals together. You may request a conference any time.
- **Get involved.** Join us for family events, read to the class, share a family tradition, volunteer on field trips (volunteers who will be alone with children need a background check), or join our family advisory group.
- **Family resources.** We share information on child development, health, nutrition and community services, including Georgia's free Pre-K, Babies Can't Wait and CAPS.

Questions and concerns. We want to hear from you.

1. Start with your child's teacher, at a time when they are not supervising children.
2. If it is not resolved, contact the Director.
3. If it is still not resolved, contact the Owner.

Respectful conduct. Please treat staff, children and other families with respect. Threatening or abusive language or behavior on our property may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

13 Withdrawal, Suspension and Termination of Enrollment

Withdrawing your child. Please give two weeks' written notice. Tuition is due for the notice period whether or not your child attends.

Suspension and expulsion policy. Georgia licensing rules require centers to share their suspension and expulsion policies with families. Kidz Korner works to keep every child enrolled. Before we consider suspension or dismissal for behavior, we will:

1. Meet with you and make a written plan together.
2. Try strategies in the classroom and seek outside support (such as DECAL's Inclusion and Behavior Support program or a developmental screening referral, with your consent).
3. Allow reasonable time to see progress.

If a child's behavior continues to seriously endanger the child or others despite these steps, Kidz Korner may suspend care for a short time or end enrollment, with written notice when possible. We will help you find another program that may better meet your child's needs.

Kidz Korner may also end enrollment, with or without notice, for:

- Tuition or fees more than 2 weeks past due without a payment plan
- Repeated late pickups or failure to follow center policies
- Failure to provide required records, such as Form 3231
- Threatening, abusive or disruptive behavior by a parent or other adult
- Repeatedly bringing a child who is ill and should be excluded

14 Sources and Parent Acknowledgment

Sources (checked October 2026):

- Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 591-1-1-.32, Staff:Child Ratios and Supervision — law.cornell.edu
- DECAL Licensing Rule Changes, 2025 — decal.ga.gov
- DECAL Criminal Records Check — decal.ga.gov/ccs/criminalrecordscheck.aspx

- DECAL Health and Safety Resources — decal.ga.gov
- DECAL Quality Rated — decal.ga.gov/qualityinitiatives/qualityrated.aspx
- Georgia.gov: Required health records (Forms 3231 and 3300)
- Georgia mandated reporting, O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5

Parent Handbook Acknowledgment

I have received and read the Kidz Korner Learning Academy Parent Handbook, including the policies on tuition, illness, medication, behavior guidance, and suspension and expulsion. I agree to follow these policies. I understand that Kidz Korner staff are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect, and that these policies may change with written notice.

Child's name

Parent/guardian name (print)

Parent/guardian signature Date

Director signature Date

Kept in the child's file at Kidz Korner Learning Academy.

Notes

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