



Parents Policy Handbook

School Information:

Tel: 732-442-7980

Email: vidaacademy189@gmail.com

Website:

We are looking forward to your child(ren) attending our Preschool. It is our goal to provide a safe, educational and fun atmosphere for your children. In order to do so we must all abide by the same policies. Please remember that we have an open door policy and any concerns, questions or comments are always welcomed. We are guided by, but not limited to the Minimum Standards set forth by the State of New Jersey. We Pledge that the Care and Nurturing of your Children are our First Priority, and it is our goal to help children learn through play. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully and sign the last page and return it to the office ASAP.

Thank You,
Lillian Santiago
Director

Mission Statement:

Vida Academy is committed to providing a wonderful learning experience for every child who walks through our doors and later progresses in the academic journey, better equipped with social skills, cognitive skills and emotionally adjusted to cope with higher school age learning.

TABLE CONTENT

PROGRAMS AND PRICING
HOURS OF OPERATION
TUITION
ABSENTEEISM
ANIMALS
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES
BITING POLICY
CLASS PARTIES
CURRICULUM
CUSTODY OF CHILDREN
DISCIPLINE
DRESSING YOUR CHILD FOR
SCHOOL FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS
EMERGENCY PICK-UP INFORMATION
HEARING AND VISION
IMMUNIZATIONS
INCLEMENT WEATHER
INJURIES/MEDICAL EMERGENCIES
LOST AND FOUND
MEALS
MEDICATIONS
BREAST FEEDING
NAPTIME
NON-DISCRIMINATORY
POLICY OPEN DOOR POLICY
OUTDOOR PLAY
PERSONAL ITEMS
POLICY AND/OR PROCEDURE CHANGES/NOTIFICATIONS
REPORTING ABUSE/NEGLECT
SCHOOL PICTURES/SNAPSHOTS
SICKNESS
STAFF
WATER ACTIVITIES
WITHDRAWAL
FIELD TRIPS

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday – Friday 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Summer Camp Hours: 7:00 am - 5:00pm

(See website or ask office personnel for holiday closures)

TUITION

Tuition is due in advance on a weekly basis. If you prefer, you may pre-pay for more than one week in advance. We also accept automatic drafts and credit cards. There will be a \$25 late fee if payment is not received by Friday at 6:00 PM and \$5 per day thereafter. If payment is not received by Wednesday, you must speak with the Director before being allowed to sign your child in for the day. If the account is not paid in full by the end of the day on Wednesday, your child(ren) may not return to the center until the balance is paid in full. You may request a receipt with each payment; otherwise a yearly statement will be provided to you for tax purposes.

Hours of operation are M-F from 7:00 am-6:00 pm. However, contracted hours of care vary by family. Each family should adhere to hours contained within their contract in order to ensure adequate staffing during hours of child/rens attendance.

ADDITIONAL FEES

A one time, non refundable registration fee of **\$50** is required per child upon

enrollment, 2nd child **\$25**. Tuition is due on **Monday** or 1st of Each Month for monthly payers. prior to services rendered. **A**

\$10 a day late charge will apply to all late payments. If tuition becomes over a week late the child will not be able to attend. **Return Check fee is \$30.00 plus \$20.00 late fee.** If your child is absent for one week without contact from you, he/she will be withdrawn from the roll and you will have to pay **that week's tuition plus registration in order to reenroll. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to any of these policies.**

Tuition does not change until the child is of age. The classroom does not determine the rate of tuition.

Misc. It is the Parents responsibility to keep the Preschool informed if any changes need to be made in the child's enrollment files. These changes may include, but are not limited to: Immunization updates, medical information, parents contact numbers, emergency numbers, pick-up lists, etc. These files are essential for the well-being of your child and the other children in the Preschool, so please keep them current.

ABSENTEEISM

Daily lessons are very important in the shaping of your child's academic life. Regular attendance is encouraged to promote good learning habits. If your child will be absent, please contact the front office. Please note that a full week's tuition is due, whether or not your child is in attendance. If your child is absent for any reason, illness, vacation etc., tuition is still due. After one full year of full-time enrollment, each child is eligible for one week of vacation without paying tuition per year.

ANIMALS

For the safety and sanitation of all children, Vida Academy has no animals policy.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Vida Academy has a secure, electronic entry code for parents to obtain entrance into the facility. This allows parents only access during regular business hours, but prevents outsiders from entering the building without the Director's knowledge. Parents are required to sign their child in and out daily in the child's classroom. Drop-in's are required to sign in at the office and in the classroom. Instructors are not allowed to sign children in or out. Until your child is signed in by a parent, or a person that is allowed to do so, they are not considered part of the program, and Vida Academy is not liable for their being. If someone other than the child's parent or guardian picks up a child, they will be escorted to the child's classroom by office personnel.

BITING POLICY

Biting is common in a childcare environment. Reasons for biting include teething, sensory exploration, autonomy and control, peer interaction, imitation, frustration, anxiety, and curiosity. It occurs most frequently when a child is tired, frustrated or over-stimulated. What do we do when biting occurs?

- Attend to the recipient first. Complete an incident report for every incident. Report to the director and to the child's parents as quickly as possible. Wash bite mark with soap and water, apply ice, comfort child.
- The biting child will assist with applying ice to the injured child and then be redirected to appropriate activities. The teacher will visit with the child who bit regarding the seriousness of biting. Par-ents of the children involved will be notified. However, neither the parents of the bitten child nor the parents of the biting child will be given the name of the other child involved in the incident.
- When a child has bitten several times in a short period of time, an intervention plan will be developed by the teacher(s), the director, and the child's parents. Some examples of interventions could include offering the child a teething toy, washcloth, or other item to chew on. We will allow the child to carry items from home with them that parent's feel might assist in prevention of biting.

The intervention plan will require input and ideas from all involved. It will include actions to be taken by the director, teacher and the parents. The plan is a team effort to protect all of the children in our care. If a child continues to bite with little or no sign of improvement, Vida Academy reserves the right to suspend the child from the center. The child will be suspended if it is determined that the safety of other children is being compromised. The Director reserves the right to suspend or permanently dismiss a child.

CLASS PARTIES

We enjoy celebrating with the children! We encourage parents to sign up for class holiday parties with their child's teacher. Parents may bring store bought birthday cakes or food items that do not contain any nut products for our celebrations. Small goodie bags may also be distributed to the class as long as they do not contain homemade food items. Goodie bags will be handed out at the end of the day and taken home. Toys must be age appropriate and not a choking hazard. NO BALLOONS are allowed for the safety of all children.

CURRICULUM

Early Start is a complete curriculum program for children ages 2-5, available all 12 months of the year. Each month Early Start provides new activities in math, science, reading readiness, colors, shapes, alphabet letters and sounds, pre-writing, thinking skills and discussions. To enhance these activities Early Start provides poems, finger plays, songs, stories, games, movement and physical activities, cooking, and craft ideas. Each day's activities are designed to involve each child in the learning process both mentally and physically. The activity paper provided for each day reviews the learning activities of the day and gives each child a "take-home" to share with his or her family. This activity paper keeps families informed of the learning activities provided by Vida Academy.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

From time to time, Vida Academy may be placed in a difficult situation regarding custody disputes. Without a court order, Vida Academy cannot deny a parent access to his or her child. If a custody document is present, Vida Academy will notify the guardian parent of any attempted contact made by the unauthorized parent. Vida Academy will also notify authorities, no exceptions. Staff members will be instructed not to put themselves or the other children in jeopardy to mediate a family dispute or attempt to enforce a court order. Non-custodial parents cannot act as a parent volunteer for center events without written permission from the custodial parent.

DISCIPLINE

What we will do regarding discipline:

- We will use age appropriate consequences for unwanted behaviors
- We will try to use preventative, not punishing techniques such as, age appropriate time outs, separation from activities, discussions on behavior, redirection to another activity etc.
- We will approach each child as an individual and deal with them in a way that is most appropriate for their age level and personality.
- We will train our staff to deal with an array of discipline issues.
- We will use special restraining techniques if a child is uncontrollable and in danger of hurting themselves or another student or staff member

What we will NOT do regarding discipline:

- WE will NEVER deny food as punishment.
- WE will NEVER scream at or intimidate children.
- We will NEVER use corporal punishment.
- WE will NEVER shame or embarrass a child

DRESSING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes that are okay to get dirty. We do lots of messy, fun activities such as gardening, painting and playing outdoors. Young children need to wear sturdy footwear that they can run and play in without tripping. Close toed rubber soled shoes are preferred. Sandals or flip flops are strongly discouraged. We recommend you bring a change of clothes (please label with your child's name) including socks, underwear, pants and shirt to keep in your

child's cubby in case of an accident. With our unpredictable New Jersey weather, it's a great idea to keep a sweater or light jacket in your child's classroom in case they need it throughout the day.

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

We will have practice fire drills on a monthly basis and tornado drills every three months, or more frequently if Vida Academy feels it is necessary. During the fire drill, the children are required to line up (age appropriate) and exit the building in an orderly manner with their instructor in 3 minutes or less. We practice these drills regularly in case of an actual emergency. There may be occasion when the fire department must test the system for safety issues. If this occurs your child may say there were loud noises at the center; please do not be alarmed. If we have an actual emergency, you will be notified. In the event of an actual emergency causing evacuation of the building, children may be transported to an alternative site.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN:

An emergency preparedness plan can be provided upon request.

EMERGENCY PICK-UP INFORMATION

We request that all parents list at least one emergency contact with name, address and phone number. In the event you have an emergency and need someone else to pick up your child, you must call and speak with the Director to inform them that the person listed as your emergency contact will be arriving to pick up your child. When they arrive, they must show picture identification and sign the child out through the office.

HEARING AND VISION

All Preschoolers ages 4 and older must have a hearing and vision screening in order to attend Vida Academy. This screening must be on file no later than 30 days after the child's 4th birth-day. The child's physician may complete this screening during a well child visit or at the County Health Department.

HOLIDAYS

Vida Academy will be closed on certain holidays. Please see the Director or our website for a list dates for closings. Although the center will be closed so that staff and children may spend time with their families, weekly tuition will remain the same.

The Center will be closed for the following paid holidays:

- New Years Day
- Friday before Easter Sunday
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- Christmas Week Off

In the event that a holiday falls on the weekend, we will be closed either the Friday before and/or the Monday after.

IMMUNIZATIONS

It is a requirement by the State of New Jersey that all children in our facility have their immunizations current and on file. If a parent fails to provide proof of immunizations, the child will not be admitted to the center.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, Vida Academy will follow the decision of Perth Amboy Board of Ed regarding closing. Tuition remains the same on days we are closed for inclement weather.

INJURIES/MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

By signing the registration consent form, you have given Vida Academy employees the ability to secure medical care for your child in the event of injury or illness in your absence. You will assume liability for payment. Minor injuries such as scrapes and bruises will be taken care of by the teachers in the classroom. We will make every effort to contact you at the number(s) you have provided us on your child's registration form for more serious situations. If we cannot reach you at these numbers, we will call your emergency contacts. In the event of an emergency, we will call 911. Vida Academy will not be responsible for the costs of medical treatment for children who are injured due to accidents or any other reason other than negligence.

LOST AND FOUND

Items that are lost will be placed in the office for 30 days only. After 30 days items will be donated to charity.

MEDICATIONS

Vida Academy will administer prescription medication to your child provided we have a medication form completed. All medication must be a prescription, in the original container. The label must have child's name on it for which we are to administer the medication. We will only give medication according to the directions on the container. We are not permitted to administer over the counter medications unless we have written approval from a physician with the directions for administering such medications. Parents must also complete a Medication form in the office. Vida Academy keeps an Illness Report posted on the front bulletin board to inform parents of more serious contagious illnesses.

NAPTIME

Our busy children take age appropriate naps after lunch for approximately 2 hours. Because we work so hard in the morning and have a lot more to learn in the afternoon, we require all children (other than school age), to lay down during nap time. If your child brings bedding (i.e. blankets, nap mat covers, pillows) from home for their nap mats, you must take it home at least once per week for washing. If your child has had an illness or the teacher feels the bedding needs to be washed more frequently, you may be asked to accommodate this request.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Vida Academy welcomes and encourages all individuals and families to participate in our program regardless of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Vida Academy has an open door policy. Parents are welcome and encouraged to observe our classes at anytime.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Weather permitting; all children will have outdoor play each day. If your child is too sick to play outside, please visit with the Director before leaving your child. We will not go out on hazardous ozone alert days with the level of red or higher. If you wish

for your child to wear sunscreen to protect them from the sun, please make sure you put it on them before coming to school each day.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Please leave toys, games, dolls and other figures at home or in the car. If your child sleeps with a special blanket or doll, it must remain in the child's cubby until nap time.

Vida Academy is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.

POLICY AND/OR PROCEDURE CHANGES/NOTIFICATIONS

Policies and procedures are subject to change. Any changes will be included in our monthly newsletter.

REPORTING ABUSE/NEGLECT

It is our responsibility as childcare providers to report child abuse or neglect. Our reports will be filed with the Child Protective Services. These calls are made anonymously. Vida Academy may or may not advise you if a call has been made on your child's behalf. To report child abuse contact (800) 252-5400. Children's safety and security is our priority.

SCHOOL PICTURES/SNAPSHOTS

We enjoy taking snapshots of the activities the children participate in at the center. These pictures may be printed and posted on the doors and walls of the classroom, or sent out in advertisements for the center. By enrolling your child in Vida Academy, you consent that your child's photograph may be used for the above purposes. No names will be used on any photographs at the center. If you do not wish to have your child's picture taken during the school year at Vida Academy, you must speak with the Director. This will mean your child may not participate in some activities in which pictures will be taken. School pictures available for purchase will be taken in the Fall and Spring of each year.

SICKNESS

Children should not attend the center if they have had a fever, vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours. Children will be sent home if the instructor or Director feel the child is in ill health (having a fever of more than 98.6 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, nasal discharge that is not clear, or if the child appears lethargic). If a child is sent home with a fever of 100.4 or greater, they must be fever-free for 24 hours before they return to the center or have a doctor's note.

STAFF

Our instructors receive no less than 20 hours of ongoing training per year and all have CPR/ First Aid Certifications. In addition to annual training, the majority of our staff have many years of experience and/or college courses in child development. Vida Academy conducts a thorough background check, including an FBI Fingerprint exam on all potential employees.

Vida Academy Staff are not allowed to transport children in their personal vehicles. Vida Academy Staff are not permitted to baby sit for children currently enrolled in our program unless notification is given to the Director. If staff violates this rule, they are subject to release.

Vida Academy will not be held responsible for actions of employees while taking care of children outside of the daycare.

TB TESTING

TB testing is not currently required for children to attend Vida Academy. It is, however, required for teachers and staff. If it does become necessary for students to have the testing, we will notify parents.

TRANSPORTATION

Vida Academy transports children before and after-school. We will transport kids within school community.

WITHDRAWAL

Any family wishing to withdraw from Vida Academy must give a two-week written notice to the Director. Future admission to Vida Academy will require registration and supply fees, as well as paying any outstanding balance from previous enrollment.

FIELD TRIPS

- Each child will have prior written permission from their parents.
- Each child will wear a name tag with their name, the centers name and telephone number and address on it.
- A first-aid box will be taken along on each field trip.
- Emergency transpiration form will be taken for each child.
- Transportation for trips will be as noted on the permission slips. It may be either a school bus or walking.

Policy Handbook Agreement

By signing below, I am indicating that I have read, understand, and agree to each of the policies in the Policy Handbook for Vida Academy.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
Provider Signature	Date