



Children of Light Academy



Welcome to Children of Light Academy.

Questions and feelings of anticipation are quite common as you make the decision of where to send your child to school. Hopefully, this Parent Handbook can help you answer some of those questions as well as help you feel that you made the right choice for your child. There are so many issues in childcare today. Children of Light Academy strive to eliminate as many of those as possible making your child's learning environment, nurturing, loving and full of positive energy. Preschool is the beginning of what your child will define as "school". He or she will develop an attitude about school that could carry throughout the rest of his or her "school life". The goal of Children of Light Academy is to form that attitude into a successful one making Children of Light Academy one of the many positive aspects of your child's school years. Here are some commonly asked questions and answers to help you with any inquiries you may have.

The Children of Light Academy is committed in supporting individual differences and diversity throughout the academy.

Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me." Mark 9:36-37



Children of Light Academy



What are the admission criteria?

We accept children from 6 weeks of age through 5 years of age and also offer a before and after care program for children ages 5 through 12 years old. We want to meet with each parent and child before enrollment of the child. This allows the school and family to begin a long and life lasting relationship in the beginning years of your child's school.

What about Children of Light Academy Programs? How will I know what's going on in my child's classroom?

Children of Light Academy have developed its own curriculum in addition to the creative curriculum that we have in place for the teachers to use and develop weekly lesson plans from. The activities are theme centered and are age appropriate for each group of children. Each family will receive "take home" suggestions you can do with your child at home that deal with the weekly lesson plan. Every classroom has a Family Center that will show you each week's lesson plans, as well as schedules, and important happenings. All of these things combined should keep you up to date on what is going on in your child's classroom but if you still have questions you are always encouraged to ask your child's teacher or your director.

Will my child learn the ABC's or 123's?

Every child develops in his or her own time. Since the goal of Children of Light Academy is to give every child a positive outlook on school we let them do just that.... develop on their own. Our responsibility is to provide the children opportunities for all aspects of learning. How do we do that? We enrich our classrooms with letters, books, counting and sorting items, number games, sensory experiences and lots of love. The children make the choices as to where they want to learn and play, and as we all know, children learn through play. When they choose to go to the library area to spend some "play time" they are choosing to look at books with print in them (letter recognition). In the math area they may choose to sort the colored bears in-groups (grouping is the start of mathematics). Your child may choose to play in the sensory area where he or she will measure and pour (here we go with those math skills again). We also offer computers in our older classroom for the children to use through out each day. See all the things your child may learn just by having the opportunities to choose what they want to do? There isn't a teacher pushing them to memorize flash cards or read a story out loud. Children choose to learn on their own keeping that positive attitude about school.

From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. Psalm 8:2



Children of Light Academy



What if my child chooses only to play in dramatic play or blocks?

Every child develops at his or her own rate. If your child loves the blocks or can't stay out of dramatic play, your child is learning important social skills. How to deal with other children, how to ask instead of take. What to do when someone does something he or she doesn't like. Your child is learning and developing small and large motor skills by balancing blocks, and

buttoning the buttons on the "dress up" clothes. All of these skills are just as important as ABC's and 123's. When your child is ready to practice writing or counting, it will be when he or she is ready and can have a positive attitude about it.

What if my child has a discipline problem?

Listening skills are a big part of a child's development. It is important that all of the children can follow directions and instructions. We will work, within our capacity, with every child that may be experiencing any discipline problems. This may include, behavior modification programs, phone calls to the parent at work, daily notes home, and/or special rewards for positive behavior. We will be continuously working with the parent to try to improve any unacceptable behavior. In the event that the child needs more one on one attention that we cannot provide we will ask you to find another center that specializes in discipline/behavior issues, as that would be in the best interest of the child.

At what point during the day does the programming come in?

Children of Light Academy staff are offering bits of programming all day. Throughout the morning and afternoons if the children are not in a large group setting there are usually small directed groups at a table or on the carpet participating in a focused small group activity. These activities could range from art projects to matching games and activities or even a cooking or sensory experience. This gives any child who wants to participate, more teacher focused attention for that activity.

I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it



Children of Light Academy



How are the teachers trained and screened?

All Children of Light Academy staff must go through all the appropriate finger printing and criminal checks as stated by the Licensing Board. In addition to that, we use an extensive hiring process consisting of a double interview and an observation period. At the time of hire our staff does a day of orientation and a day of “fun” where he or she can really spend some free time in each classroom getting to know the teachers and children before becoming responsible for a classroom. Children of Light Academy head teacher will be responsible for helping any new staff member learn Children of Light safety policies, curriculum, and schedules.

What precautions do children of Light take about who picks up my child?

Anyone picking up or dropping off your child, which must be on the Permission to Remove form **must be at least 18 years of age or older.**

If someone other than those listed on the Permission to remove form will be picking up your child, a note signed by the parent or guardian must be submitted. At no time will we release a child if this procedure is not followed. All persons removing a child from the center must have picture identification. Again, if these procedures are not followed, we will not release your child. **This is for the safety of your child and one rule we will not bend at all.** If you choose to add or delete a person from the Permission to Remove Form, you must do so in writing and submit it to the Director.

Any and all unfamiliar persons will have picture identification checked. Even if the person is just visiting your child and not removing them from the center, picture identification will be requested. These persons must all be listed on the Permission to remove form, under visitors only.

How and when do I pay my tuition?

Tuition is due on the Friday before the first day that your child attends Children of Light Academy. If we do not receive your tuition by the close of the business day on Friday of that week (end of the week) a \$15.00 late fee will be charged. We gladly accept checks, cash and money orders.

What are your hours you are open?

We will be open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (with the exception of the days listed in the holiday section). You are welcome to bring your child anytime within those hours.

Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck



Children of Light Academy



What if I cannot get to the center before 6:30 p.m.?

Children of Light Academy close at 6:30 p.m. Please be considerate, our teachers have families and plans to go home to and they expect to leave on time. If you are running a few minutes late please call to let us know. The late pick up charge is \$5.00 per minute after 6:30 p.m. and \$10 per minute per child on Fridays.

What types of registration fees are there?

Children of Light Academy have chosen not to charge a registration fee. However, we will charge a yearly program fee for the supplies and necessities that go along with the curriculum. The program fee is \$20 per year, per child. It is due each year at the end of August. For more information see your director.

What about when I go on vacation or my child is sick?

You will always be required to pay the full amount of tuition whether your child is in attendance at Children of Light Academy or not. You will be given a voucher for one free vacation or sick week per year. This voucher is good from September 1st to August 31st each year. If you choose not to use it or your child has not been absent a full week there will not be any monies refunded to you for it nor will it carry to the next year. Your child must be absent the full week (Monday to Friday) in order to receive the free week.

In the event that the school is closed due to a pandemic we will request that parents do not pay during the closure, but in the event that your child needs to be quarantined then you need to pay 50% of tuition to hold your child's spot.

If a family member (parent or sibling) needs to be quarantined then your child also will need to be quarantined for at least 1 week then if after the 1 week you can test the child and their results come back negative then they can come back to the center.

From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.



Children of Light Academy



What about Holiday's?

Children of Light Academy will be closed the following Holidays:

- Closed Memorial Day
- Closed Independence Day
- Closed - The 2 business days before public school starts
- Closed Labor Day
- Closed Thanksgiving Day
- Closed The day after Thanksgiving Day
- Closed Christmas Eve
- Closed Christmas Day
- Closed The day after Christmas
- Closed Early New Years Eve
- Closed New Years Day
- Closed Coptic Orthodox Christmas Day (January 7th)
- Closed Martin Luther King Day

If the Holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday Children of Light Academy will observe the Holiday the Friday before or the Monday after.

Is the tuition discounted during those weeks?

Tuition will remain the same during Holiday weeks since one of Children of Light Academy benefits to their staff are paid holidays!!

When does my tuition increase?

Each year as our employees receive an increase in pay we will need to adjust our tuition. Tuition increase will go into effect August if we increase. We will give a 2-week notice before the change will take effect. However, Children of Light Academy reserves the right to increase the tuition at any time even if that means more than once per year. There is some good news though, in certain age groups when your child moves there will actually be a tuition decrease!

But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 19:14



Children of Light Academy



WHAT ARE THE SIGN IN AND SIGN OUT POLICIES?

We are aware that you may be rushed at drop-off and pick-up times, but please take the time to find your child's name in the sign in /sign out book and sign them in and out EVERYDAY. It's a requirement of Pasco county license board that each child is signed in and out daily on the sheet provided. You must sign with both your first and last name. The children's names are in alphabetical order by last name in the sign-in/sign out book located in the classroom.

In addition you can also use your fingerprint to sign your child/ren in and out.

Will my child be going on field trips?

If your child is in our VPK class or is enrolled in our before and after school program your child will be participating in field trips. All field trip permission slips MUST BE SIGNED in order for your child to participate.

My child has a special toy that they like to bring to school. Is this okay?

We encourage children to bring a soft animal, toy or blanket that will fit in their cubby for rest time. However, with the magnitude of toys that Children of Light Academy is proud to offer to the children we ask that any other toys be left at home. Children of Light Academy cannot be responsible for any toys that are lost or broken.

My child is still in diapers, how often is he or she changed?

At Children of Light Academy toddlers age one (1) are checked every hour or more often if needed. In the two-year-old rooms diapered children are checked every hour and a half to two (2) hours. Every child will be changed as needed if it is off of the scheduled time. If your child is three years old or older and still in diapers or is not showing signs of readiness for potty training, he/she will stay in the two year old classroom as that is the classroom equipped for changing diapers.

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4



Children of Light Academy



What about potty training, when will my child be potty trained?

Usually potty training doesn't start until the age of two (2). There are many things that go into potty training. Your child must be interested, ready and willing. We do not want to push any child into potty training. This is one area where they have complete control and any negative feelings about this could prolong the process.

Is there any video surveillance?

Yes, We have cameras in each room that record each classroom 12 hours per day. You are welcome to stop in the office and view your child's classroom for a few minutes as long as the office door is open.

What if my child is sad or is crying a lot?

We will always do our best to comfort your child anytime he or she is upset. If we feel that your child is sick or in pain we may call you to either let you know your child is upset or ask you to come pick up depending on the circumstances. Children can have "bad" days just like us. Here at Children of Light Academy we do our best to make your child feel comfortable and happy. If he or she is crying or upset we always try to take the time to figure out what is wrong and remedy the situation.

What if my child gets hurt or is bitten?

If your child is hurt at Children of Light Academy we will provide you with an accident report that explains what happened and what marks the accident may have made on your child. Likewise, if your child hurts another child you will receive an incident report home. A management team member and the parent will sign these reports.

Biting is a common, unfortunate incident that can happen in-groups of children. The most common ages for the occurrences are 1 and 2. Children that bite are often looked at as aggressive or mean but that stereotype is not true. There are many reasons children bite from teething to lack of communication skills. There are some things that we can do at Children of Light Academy to help. Although we can do some things to help decrease biting we cannot guarantee that your child will not be bitten. We are more than happy to call you if this happens to your child during the day just let us know that you would like us to do this for you.

Children's children are the crown of old men,
And the glory of children is their father. Proverbs 17:6



Children of Light Academy



What if my child is the biter?

If your child bites another child you will receive an incident report home that day. If your child is consistently biting, we will try to work with you and your child during this time. However, if we cannot help curve or eliminate the biting we will be forced to ask you to find other care.

When is rest time and what if my child doesn't sleep?

Each classroom goes down for rest time at a different time. We ask that all of the children rest and be quiet for at least 45 minutes. After that if your child is not sleeping he or she will be allowed to do quiet activities on his/ her cot or at the table.

My child gets thirsty and hungry during the day. Will he or she be allowed to drink and eat when he/she wants to?

Although there are scheduled snack times if your child is thirsty at other times during the day they will be allowed to get a drink. Our toddlers (ones) will have juice and cracker on demand. All children have a bottle with their name labeled on it for their daily use.

What about my child's snacks and lunch?

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner are served at Children of Light Academy. You are not allowed to bring in food from outside. If you're dropping off your child to school early in the morning before 8:00am make sure the child has eaten a breakfast.

Prohibited Accessories:

No Beads in children's hair, small rubber bands, beads, barrettes, rubber bands, drawstrings on clothing, jewelry (necklaces, bracelets, etc.), pacifiers with long cord attachment apparatus are allowed at the center as they are a choking hazard.

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. Ephesians 5:1



Children of Light Academy



What if I am in the area and I want to stop by to see my child?

Children of Light Academy supports an Open Door Policy, meaning that you are welcome into the center ANYTIME! In fact, we encourage it! Please remember though that with younger children sometimes it can cause separation anxiety for them when you leave, especially when it is off of their normal schedule! We are great at hiding you so you can “spy” if you want to!

What can I do for my child’s birthday?

With the exception of balloons and homemade goodies you are welcome to do anything you want to for your child’s birthday. Some families will actually have the party here with cake. Other families will simply bring in cupcakes and the teacher can give them out as a snack with the Happy Birthday song. It’s up to you just let us know your plans so we can plan the day accordingly!

What should my child wear to school each day?

Your child will be running, jumping, sitting on the floor, into paint and markers all day, every day. He or she needs to be comfortable. Please keep this in mind as you dress your child each day. The only restriction we have is that your child wears some type of sneaker or tie shoe. This helps protect their feet from other little feet and anything outside!

Shoes not to be worn are:

- Flip-flops
- Jellies
- Backless shoes
- Boots
- Dress shoes

Also, be sure to provide an extra change of clothes (including socks and underwear) in case of accidents or spills. Please label the clothing and put them in a Ziploc bag to be kept in your child’s cubby.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. John 1:12



Children of Light Academy



What if my child is sick or needs medicine?

Anything that is considered medication (including diaper rash cream) needs a form to be filled out in order for Children of Light Academy staff to be able to administer to your child. Unless we have this form on hand with the name of the medicine and the directions written clearly on it, then we cannot give your child any medicines.

If it is a prescription medicine please make sure to have an extra label printed at the pharmacy and place it on the bottle that you are dropping off with your child at the center.

For more information please see our medicine policy and sick policy Contained in your enrollment packet.

Do any of the teachers do any baby-sitting?

Children of Light Academy recognize the need of families for care at times other than during Children of Light hours. However, it is a conflict of interest for our staff to baby sit children enrolled at Children of Light Academy.

How do I enroll my child at the children of Light Academy?

Enrolling and/or reserving a future space for your child is simple. 1.) Contact us to schedule a time for you and your child to visit us in our pre-school. We will be happy to answer any questions that you may have. During your visit, you will have the opportunity to meet with us, learn more about what we have to offer, and meet some of the other children that we provide care for. This time spent gives all involved an opportunity to get to know one another and to make sure that all personalities mix well. This is important and helps to ensure that both parties are comfortable with their surroundings and expectations. 2.) After which time the registration process may begin; consisting of parent handbook, parent/provider enrollment agreement, and various enrollment forms. Once they are read, completed, signed and returned, and the deposit has been paid, your child's space has been reserved. The one week of tuition is required 2 business days before the first day of attendance. 3.) And the final step is to simply decide on a start date. Please download and fill out the appropriate forms at our website: www.colacademy.org

Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him. Proverbs 127:3



Children of Light Academy



WHAT ARE POLICIES ON ENTRANCE FEES, TUITION, PAYMENTS AND REFUNDS?

Our center has no registration fees. Tuition is due by Fridays of the same week care is given and late fees will be applied on Monday after 10:00 a.m. at \$15.00 and then \$5.00 after that per day. Any refunds will be documented in writing and given within two weeks of documentation.

WHAT ARE YOUR POLICIES FOR TERMINATION?

The first two weeks will be regarded as a trial period, in which case either party may terminate the agreement without notice. After the first two weeks of enrollment, a two-week written notice from parent or provider is required to terminate the agreement, with exception of gross misconduct on part of the provider, parent or child. This is ground for immediate discontinuation of service. In case of non-payment, legal action may be taken, and the parents will pay all legal fees incurred.

Failure to disclose COVID-19 symptoms of any individual(s) in the household or exposure will result in termination from Children of Light Academy

And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven Matthew 18:2



Children of Light Academy



We hope that this handbook has helped you with any questions you may have had. We are excited to watch your child learn and grow with us. Please remember, we want your child to be happy here and we want you to feel confident in the environment that we provide for your family. If you ever have any questions, comments or compliments we are always here to listen and help remedy anything that you may need.

Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.