



**2021**

## **Parent Handbook**

### Philosophy

Joy Kids Learning Center LLC is excited to offer an educational program for children of all abilities, languages and cultures. Our program utilizes developmentally appropriate practices that enhance the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each child.

The Joy Kids Learning Center believes that open communication between the teachers, students, administration and parents is critical to the overall success of the children, the family unit, and the Learning Center. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education through volunteering at the center and participating in special events.

The college educated, certified teachers strive to create a fun, safe, respectful and Christian environment that follows the children's interests. Joy Kids Learning Center encourages and provides opportunities for staff development in Early Childhood Education. We strive to keep our staff current on the latest research and best practices in Early Childhood Education.

### Curriculum

Joy Kids Learning Center utilizes the Creative Curriculum.

Children are naturally curious, they want to know about the world. The Creative Curriculum taps into this sense of wonder by connecting play, imagination, and content to the real world. The Creative Curriculum respects the role of the preschool teacher in making learning exciting and relevant for each child. Joy Kids Learning Center has developed monthly themes that support the implementation of The Creative Curriculum.

Joy Kids Learning Center also believes in the full development of children, which includes their spirituality. Therefore, daily activities are supplemented with Christian themes.

In order to benefit the most from our curriculum, children should arrive no later than 9 AM.

### Mission

The mission of Joy Kids Learning Center is to provide a Christian learning and development experience for young children.

### Goals

The goal of Joy Kids Learning Center is to provide a safe, loving environment in which Christian child care services can be provided to children from the ages of two to ten years old for the Edgewater community. Children not potty trained will be admitted.

Enrollment will be granted without discrimination in regards to sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation or political preference. We do require a pre-enrollment visit. Full-time/ Part-time enrollment is defined as follows:

### **Full Time:**

A child enrolled Monday through Friday is considered full time.

School-age at Edgewater is M - F before & after school.

### **Part Time:**

A child enrolled two or three full days per week is considered part time.

**Our school year runs from September to June. Re-registration will occur each year in February.**

**Summer: Summer enrollment is separate from the school year. Registration for summer enrollment will occur in March. Currently enrolled families must enroll for a minimum of 2 days in summer to hold fall spot.**

## Positive Behavioral Practices Policy

At Joy Kids Learning Center we take many steps to build positive relationships with the children and families in our program. For example, we greet all children and families as they arrive each day, we keep a line of communication open with families by using casual conversation, conferences, emails and our app and we host family activities like field trips, a Thanksgiving Feast and a Christmas program.

We use a variety of strategies to encourage children's positive behaviors and help them avoid negative behavior such as clearly stating the rules and expectations, modeling positive & effective ways to express their feelings and emotions, supporting reflection, problem solving & negotiation between children and redirecting children toward positive behavior.

**\*\*\* Please read our complete Positive Behavioral Practices Policy attached at the end of this handbook**

## Potty Training

Joy Kids Learning Center admits children who are not potty trained into our Jellyfish and Bumblebee classrooms. Children in the Bluebird and Pre-K classrooms must be potty trained.

Children with an IEP or medical documentation will be the exception to this rule.

**Children in diapers and pull-ups should arrive at school in a dry diaper.**

## Inclusion Policy

Joy Kids Learning Center, LLC welcomes all children and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning experiences that allow full access and participation of every child. We believe that each child is a gift from God and is unique. We work in partnership with the families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support each child needs to reach their full potential. Joy Kids Learning Center acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success.

The Teachers at Joy Kids Learning Center use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the individual needs of all children when planning. Staff will make every attempt to make any adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children. Schedules, routines and activities are flexible and the teachers work with therapists, special educators and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations and strategies into the classroom routines and activities. Training and support is provided to ensure that all staff is comfortable, confident and competent to meet the developmental and educational needs of all children at Joy Kids.

Joy Kids Learning Center is open from 6:45AM—6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The center is open year round.

Our school will be closed on the major holidays listed below. Payment is required for these holidays. We are required to follow strict child-staff ratios; therefore, we are unable to switch your child's day of attendance in the event of a holiday. Additionally Joy Kids will close for several staff development days. These days are listed below in the far right column.

New Years Day	Labor Day	<b>Friday before Presidents Day</b>
Martin Luther King Day	Thanksgiving Day and Day after	<b>Thursday &amp; Friday before</b>
President's Day	Christmas Eve	<b>school year (September)</b>
Good Friday & Easter Monday	Christmas Day	
Memorial Day	New Year's Eve	
Independence Day (July 4)		

**\*\*\*The center will close for the days between Christmas and New Year's Eve. No payment is expected for this week.**

### Arrival and Departure

- Upon arrival and departure you are required to sign your child in and out each day. The Maryland State department of Education ( MSDE) requires that we keep accurate attendance records each day in case of an emergency evacuation.
- If someone other than you will be picking up your child from Joy Kids, please notify the Director in writing. We will not release your child to anyone not listed on your child's emergency contact form. Be sure the person picking up your child has a picture ID with them.
- Children in diapers and pull-ups must arrive at school in a dry diaper or pull-up.

### Ways parents can help

- Please be sure your child arrives at Joy Kids Learning Center by 9 AM to ensure that they receive the most from our educational program.
- Please inform teachers of any changes before they happen. Changes at home often lead to changes in your child's behavior at school.
- Play clothes are recommended! Have all clothing marked with the child's name.
- All children need to be signed in and out every day by the person bringing or picking them up.
- Sippy cups are not allowed at Joy Kids. Please send a reusable water bottle.
- Please do not send a pacifier to school with your child.
- Parents are always welcome. Feel free to visit your child's class at any time. We encourage parents to volunteer also.
- Family conferences are scheduled twice a year in November and April.
- Individual cots are furnished by the center for rest time. Parents are asked to purchase a sleeping bag from the center that will be yours to keep. These will be sent home on Fridays to be washed.

## Emergency Preparedness Plan

Joy Kids Learning Center will strive to keep your child safe at all times when he/she is in our care. With recent world and local events, we have developed an emergency plan that will be put into place in the event that special circumstances require a different type of care. Plans for these special types of care are reviewed annually. Staff is trained in the appropriate response and local emergency management is aware of these plans. The specific type of emergency will guide where and what special care will be provided.

- **Shelter at the site** – This plan would be put into place in the event of weather emergency or unsafe outside conditions or threats. In this plan, children will be cared for indoors at the center and the center may be secured or locked to restrict entry. Parents will be notified if they need to pick up their child before their regular time.
- **Evacuation to another site** – This plan would be put into place in the event that it is not safe for the children to remain at the center. In this situation, staff has predetermined alternate sites for care. Each center has agreements with two local alternate sites. For more information on alternate sites please ask your center Director.
- **Method to contact parents** – in the event of emergency, parents will be called, texted and/or emailed, a note will be placed on the door, and radio/TV stations will be alerted to provide more specific information. You can also check for information on our website [www.joykidslearning.com](http://www.joykidslearning.com) or Facebook page. Depending on the distance from the center, the children will walk if feasible or be transported to the alternate site.
- **Emergency ends/reuniting with children** – When the emergency ends, parents will be informed and reunited with their children as soon as possible. The contact methods listed above will be used to inform parents.
- **Pandemic** - In the event of a pandemic Joy Kids Learning Center will follow the rules and guidance directed to us by our local and State government and the Maryland State Department of Education. We have policies and procedures in place to protect the students, families and staff during a pandemic if we are able to be open and operating. For more information on these policies and procedures please ask your center Director.

The purpose for sharing this information with you is not to cause you worry, but to reassure you that we are prepared to handle all types of emergencies in a way that will ensure the safety of your child. If you have questions regarding this information, talk with the center director or your child's teacher.



### Inclement Weather Policy



In the event of inclement weather, we will make every attempt to open the center. In the event that Anne Arundel County Public Schools has a delayed opening, or is closed, Joy Kids Learning Center will leave a message on our answering machine, send out an e-mail and text alert with instructions for the day and put the information on Facebook and our website. Check [www.aacps.org](http://www.aacps.org) for public school closing information. If Anne Arundel County government is closed, Joy Kids will **NOT** open.

Should inclement weather occur during business hours Joy Kids Learning Center will make every reasonable attempt to remain open. However, in the case of extremely dangerous road conditions or a statewide emergency it may be necessary for Joy Kids to close early. If we need to close early you will be notified to pick up your child as soon as possible. Keep all emergency contact information current so that we are able to immediately contact you.

## Illness and Communicable Disease policy



Joy Kids Learning Center is committed to keeping our school a healthy place for your child. To ensure success please watch your child for symptoms of contagious illness. To protect your child as well as the other children attending our school, please keep your child home if they have:

**Conjunctivitis** - an eye infection commonly called pink eye. The eye is red and itchy and may have yellow drainage. Children may return 24 hours after the first dose of medication.

**Elevated Temperature**— of 100 degrees or more. If your child has a fever the night before, they are most likely not well enough to attend school. **Children must be fever free without the use of medications for 24 hours before returning to school.**

**Diarrhea/vomiting**— loose, more frequent stools (more than twice a day). Upset stomach.

**Ear or throat infection (strep throat)** - unless the child has been diagnosed by a physician and has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.

**Impetigo or Ringworm**— a very contagious skin condition.

**Symptoms of chicken pox or Head Lice.**

If your child shows any signs of the listed illnesses while in attendance at our school we will do our best to make the child comfortable

while arrangements are made to have the child picked up. Children who are sent home due to illness will not be permitted to return to school until all signs of their illness have been subsided for a **24 hour period**. The only exception to this rule would be if a licensed physician indicates in writing that the child presents no health risk to others and is now able to participate in all regular school activities.

The Department of Health requires that certain communicable diseases be reported to them within 24 hours so that control measures, if needed, can be implemented. Parents and staff are urged to notify the school within 24 hours if a child or family member has developed a known or suspected communicable disease.

Examples of “reportable diseases” include the following, but are not limited to:

- Chickenpox
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella (German Measles)
- Whooping cough
- Spinal Meningitis
- Tuberculosis
- Hepatitis A
- Lyme disease
- Shigellosis
- COVID-19

A full list of reportable diseases is available at [www.ahealth.org](http://www.ahealth.org)

## Medication Policy

Should your child require prescription medication while at Joy Kids Learning Center, the state requires a medication order form (available at the center), be completed and signed by the parent. All medication must remain in the original container and must be accompanied by the RX. The RX must have the child’s full name, date(s) to be given, dosage amount, and any other specific directions. **This procedure includes all prescription medication.**

Non-prescription medication medications must be accompanied by a medication order form filled out and signed by the physician and must be in it’s original container.

All medication will be kept in a locked, labeled container in the classroom. Parents must bring medication and forms and give them to the director.

If your child has asthma or allergies an asthma or allergy action plan must be filled out and reviewed/ signed by your physician. This plan must be kept at the center in your child’s file.

The dispensation of medication is undertaken as a professional courtesy, and is not required by law. Our center reserves the right to refuse to dispense medication to any child if necessary procedures are not followed.

## Tuition and fees policy

**Registration:** A non-refundable registration fee of \$100, \$125 for two or more children, is due upon registration for new families.

Registration for currently enrolled families is \$50, \$75 for two or more children upon annual registration.

**Security Deposit:** One week's tuition. This will be held and used for your child's last week at Joy Kids. This is due before your child begins at Joy Kids.

**Class Fee:** \$150 is due annually upon registration for pre-school age children

**These rates are effective September 6, 2021:**

<u>Weekly rate (2 year old) -</u>	\$305
<u>Daily rate ( 2 year old) -</u>	\$72
<u>Weekly rate (3 - 5 year olds) -</u>	\$249
<u>Daily rate (3 - 5 year olds) -</u>	\$65
<u>Weekly rate ( 5—10) B&amp;A Edgewater Elem</u>	\$125
<u>Daily rate B &amp; A Edgewater Elem</u>	\$30

**Discounts:** 10% discount for 2 or more children (discount given to lowest tuition).

5% discount for active Joy Reigns Lutheran Church members.

**Inclement weather payment:** Parents are responsible for payment of tuition for the first two days that Joy Kids closes due to inclement weather.

Should Joy Kids close for more than two days, parents are not responsible for payment for those additional days.

**COVID- 19 closure:** Families are responsible for payment of tuition for the first week of closure due to COVID-19.

**Late payment fee:** Weekly tuition is due by **close of business Monday** for the upcoming week. Late tuition payments are subject to a \$35 late payment fee. **Accounts may not be more than two (2) weeks past due.**

Returned or declined payments are subject to a **\$25 fee**.

**Late pick-up fee:** Our school closes promptly at 6:00 PM. If you arrive after 6:00 PM you will owe a fee of \$2 per minute, per

## Termination of services by parent

In the event that you need to terminate your agreement, two weeks written notice is required. If you abruptly withdraw your child without just notification, you become responsible for two additional weeks of tuition less your security deposit. With the proper advance notification, you may use your security deposit towards your last week of service.

## Tuition Increase

Joy Kids Learning Center LLC, may increase tuition by at least 2% each year.

## Referral Policy



We love it when you refer your friends, family and coworkers to Joy Kids Learning Center! Thank you! When a new family registers their child, and lets us know you referred them, you will receive \$50 off your next weeks tuition!

## Fundraisers

As is the nature of any privately funded educational institution, all of the funds required to provide a quality program cannot come from tuition alone. Joy Kids Learning Center will conduct one or two fundraisers each year. Funds from these projects go directly to benefit the children's program at the Center.

## Parent Guide

The Maryland State Dept. of Education offers a pamphlet for all parents entitled A Parents Guide to Regulated Child Care. This pamphlet may be found at:

[www.earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org](http://www.earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org)

*Joy Kids Learning Center staff are all Mandated Reporters. We are legally required to ensure a report is made when abuse or neglect is observed or suspected.*



## Back to school night

Joy Kids Learning Center will hold a Back-to- School night for new families and children moving from one class to another. The evening will be an opportunity to gather center information, ask questions meet your child's teachers and visit in the classrooms. This evening will be during the last week of August with the date announced in early summer.

## Toys from home

Children are encouraged to leave their personal toys at home to prevent breakage, loss, and disagreements. They may bring a special toy on Show and Tell days only or a "comfort" stuffed animal for during nap time. The teacher will inform parents of the days when Show and Tell occur during the week. Joy Kids Learning Center cannot be held responsible for personal items should they become lost, broken or stolen from the center.

In the event that your child takes a toy or part of a game home, we would appreciate it if you would kindly return it to the center.



## Birthdays

At Joy Kids Learning Center we love celebrating birthdays! Families can inquire about your child's birthday celebration with the teacher. Families who wish to provide a small, special, store bought snack time treat may do so, but must make advanced arrangements with the classroom teacher. Joy Kids discourages families from distributing birthday invitations to private birthday parties via the school unless the entire class is invited.

## Screening and Assessment

Joy Kids Learning Center screens each child upon entrance to our program using Ages & Stages Questionnaire 3rd edition (ASQ-3™). Throughout the year we assess your child's development using The Investigator Club assessment. Progress reports are sent home in November and April using a checklist from The Investigator Club curriculum. Parent/teacher conferences are held at those times.

## Meals

Milk, water or juice are provided at Joy Kids for all snacks & meals. There is no need to send a drink unless your child is on a special diet.

Breakfast will be served to the children who arrive prior to 8:15am. A mid-morning snack is also served by our staff. Both meals consists of choices recommended by the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) and follow the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) guidelines. Fresh fruit and/or vegetables are served at least twice a week for snack. Fresh fruit is available daily for breakfast.

You are responsible to send a lunch for your child in a small labeled lunch box. Parents are also reminded to pack enough food for an afternoon snack. Please be sure to include at least one serving of fresh fruit or vegetables each day and be sure that the food is "ready to eat", i.e. fruit peeled and sliced. Children will be monitored to ensure they eat their "main" food, e.g. sandwich, and their fruit or vegetable before they eat any snack food packed in their lunch. We provide utensils for all meals and the staff will heat up food as needed. **Please refrain from sending items easily choked on in your child's lunch or snack. No candy or soda please.**

School age children will be served a snack each day after school.

## Joy Kids is a Peanut-free Center.

Joy Kids Learning Center will supplement children's meals as necessary to ensure they receive proper nutrition.

### SPECIAL DIET:

If your child has any food allergies, your physician's written instructions concerning such allergies must be on file at the center. Please notify us if your child has any food restrictions due to religious beliefs. We will ask parents for their permission to place their child on a posted allergy list to ensure that all Staff is well informed of this information.

## Field Trips

We will schedule various field trips throughout the year. We will need many parent volunteers. A completed permission slip must be submitted for each child in order for them to attend the field trip. We will ask parents to drive and chaperone for all field trips. Two year old children are required to have a chaperone for all field trips. If the children are riding in a car they must be in car seats families provide.

## Student tablet/computer acceptable use policy

Joy Kids Learning Center, LLC, is excited to provide supervised access to tablets for our students. We are committed to helping educate our students on the proper use of technology. The following policy provides guidelines for use of this technology while on the campus of Joy Kids Learning Center.

**Usage:** The tablet is to be used in the classroom as a supplement to the curriculum and theme that children are exploring. Only websites approved by the owners/directors are available for the students to go to, all others are blocked. This is addressed further under security. The tablet will be used to learn more about a subject from a website, e.g. look up Polar Bears during a unit on animals, to play installed “learning games” that develop and encourage children’s knowledge, and to listen to music or books that directly relate to the theme the class is exploring. Children will not be permitted to use the tablet for more than 10 - 15 minutes per day and no more than 3 days per week.

Joy Kids Learning Center does not use a television for viewing at any time. The Mayo center may use their television for playing music and dancing games through the game controller during gross motor play. These games are used no more than twice a week during inclement weather no longer than 15 minutes.

**Photos/Videos:** Students are not permitted to take pictures or videos without teacher permission

**Apps:** Preloaded apps may not be deleted. Children may not purchase new apps.

**Web Access:** Joy Kids Learning Center provides children (supervised) access to the internet. Children are not permitted to web browse.

**Security:** The iPad settings have been set to only allow children to go to appropriate websites. The following approved websites are allowed:

- ◆ Discover Kid, Disney, HowStuffWorks, National Geographic - Kids, PBS Kids, Scholastic.com, Smithsonian Institution, Time for Kids, Yahoo! Kids, Investigator Club.

This list may change as needed

Joy Kids Learning Center, LLC will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

**Violations of Acceptable Use Policy:** Violations of this *Acceptable Use Policy* will have disciplinary repercussions including but not limited to:

Suspension of network, technology, tablet or computer privileges.

**JOY KIDS LEARNING CENTER, LLC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE, ADD, DELETE AND EXTEND AND OF THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES PERTAINING TO THE TABLET AND ITS USE AT ANY TIME.**



## **Positive Behavioral Practices Policy**

At Joy Kids Learning Center we take many steps to build positive relationships with the children and families in our program. For example, we greet all children and families as they arrive each day, we keep a line of communication open with families by using casual conversation, conferences, emails and our app and we host family activities like field trips, a Thanksgiving Feast and a Christmas program.

We use a variety of strategies to encourage children's positive behaviors and help them avoid negative behavior such as clearly stating the rules and expectations, modeling positive & effective ways to express their feelings and emotions, supporting reflection, problem solving & negotiation between children and redirecting children toward positive behavior.

### **Providing Choices**

The children have multiple opportunities to make choices on their own throughout the day. There are several blocks of time throughout the day that are "child guided play" times, when children go to the center or activity that interests them. Outside on the playground the children choose where and what they play.

We offer children choices to encourage positive behaviors. Offering a child two "good" choices helps them to learn to choose a positive behavior over a negative one. For example, a child may be having difficulty choosing a center to play in or the one she wants to play in is full. Saying to her "this center is full, but you can play with playdoh at the table or you can play in Home Living" helps her make a positive choice.

### **Redirection**

At Joy Kids Learning Center we use verbal redirection to guide children to more appropriate activities or choices. A teacher may say to a child "I see that center is full. Let's find another center where there is space for another friend."

Teachers use "When-then" and "first-then" to help redirect children having difficulty finishing a required task before moving on to their choice of activity. An example would be to say, "first you put on your shoes, then you can choose a center to play in".

We use physical redirection mostly with the younger children who more frequently need a gentle touch to interrupt the negative behavior.

A two-year-old may be trying to pull a toy out of another child's hands. A teacher would touch the child on their shoulder and then take their hands and lead them away to a different toy or activity while saying "we share our toys at school. Joey is having a turn and when he is done it can be your turn. Let's play with crayons while you wait".

We use redirection with attention to help all the children recognize a positive behavior and encourage them to choose the positive behavior.

A teacher might say "I like the way Sabrina and DeShawn are sitting on the rug ready for story time."

## Reflection and Problem Solving

Joy Kids Learning Center staff encourage children to solve problems together and/or with adult help. At the lunch table it is not unusual to see one child helping another to open the packaging on their food. Often children need a little encouragement and/or modeling from adults to move to the next step in problem solving.

We help children to use reflection as a way to solve problems and resolve conflicts. Teachers in our classrooms guide and support children in learning to solve problems by asking them to stop and state what the problem is, discuss how they think it can be fixed or what are possible solutions and invite other children to help solve the problem with them.

The teacher will continue to guide the child to try the solution they choose and then check back with the child to see if their solution worked.

## Clear Rules and Expectations

At Joy Kids Learning Center we establish boundaries & rules to reassure that young children are safe and have order and stability while allowing and encouraging creativity and exploration.

Each classroom creates their own list of positive rules at the start of the school year. Positive rules reflect what the children may do in the classroom.

Having a list of positive rules supports the children in making positive choices, e.g. "I take turns, or I use walking feet."

Our program's rules and expectations for positive behavior are supported and reinforced in the following ways:

- Rules are written clearly using positive language, e.g. "we share our toys."
- Visual cues (pictures) are posted with the rules
- Limited number of rules. Younger classes have fewer rules
- Staff model and reinforce rules consistently
- Rules are reviewed with the children as needed

### Sample Daily Schedule\*

6:45-8:00 AM	Arrival, breakfast, quiet centers
8:00 – 8:15 AM	clean up - children move to separate classrooms
8:15 – 8:30 AM	Table top activities
8:30 – 9:00 AM	Gross Motor play outside (inside games, dancing for bad weather)
9:00 – 9:15 AM	Circle Time (whole group)
9:15 – 9:45 AM	Small groups (rotate at tables), centers, diapering
9:45 – 10:00AM	Clean up, Tub time, Potty/wash hands
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Snack
10:15- 10:30 AM	Preparation for outdoor play **cold/inclement weather – finger plays/songs
10:30 – 11:00 AM	Gross motor play – outdoors as weather permits
11:00 – 11:30 AM	Special daily activities: Monday – fun activities; art, cooking, science Tuesday – fun activities: art, dancing, etc. Wednesday – Chapel, Bible story Thursday – Jump Bunch Friday – Music For Life
11:30- 11:45 AM	Wash hands, story time
11:45AM – 12:30 PM	Lunch, potty, prep for nap time
12:30 – 12:45PM	Books on cots
12:45 – 3:00 PM	Nap
3:00 – 3:30 PM	bathroom/ snack
3:30 – 4:00PM	Center time
4:00 – 5:00 PM	Gross motor play outside weather permitting
5:00 – 6:00 PM	Table top games/ end of day

\* This is the schedule for one classroom. Schedules for other classes may vary slightly

---

# Acknowledgement of Receipt

## Joy Kids Learning Center Parent Handbook 2021

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of  
Name of parent

the handbook for Joy Kids Learning Center.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date