



# Parent Handbook

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Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Apostles Learning Center!

You have selected one of the finest child development centers to enroll your child. Apostles is a 2-star Quality Rated center by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. Our center provides a nurturing environment for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. We operate full time care from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

In addition, we offer a Georgia Pre-Kindergarten program for children who turn 4 years old on or before September 1st. Our summer camp program is for children entering Georgia Pre-K and ages 4 to 12.

Apostles Learning Center has successfully operated since 1972 and offers the very best in a preschool program. We care for each child with a low student-to-teacher ratio with experienced and qualified teachers and staff. Apostles Learning Center's mission is to provide a safe, nurturing environment that focuses on the developmental needs of children intellectually, socially, physically, spiritually and emotionally. Our academic program is based on the Georgia Early Learning Development Standards (GELDS) and a comprehensive curriculum designed to challenge, nourish and encourage the children through the process of age-appropriate play.

We provide a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic environment as Apostles Learning Center does not discriminate against race, religion, color, nationality or gender for admission. The staff of Apostles Learning Center encourages you to participate in your child's classroom whenever possible.

We welcome you into our Apostles family!

Jasmine Mangham  
Executive Director

# **Apostles Learning Center**

*“Where Children Soar”*

Apostles Learning Center, has served the community since 1972. Hours of operation are from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The full day program is for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Apostles currently offers Georgia Pre-K state-funded classes for children who turn 4 years old by September 1st.

## **About this Handbook**

This handbook may be updated as necessary. Additionally, changes may be made that are not immediately reflected in an updated copy of the handbook, but any policy changes will be sent through other written communications and sent directly to each family.

## **Licensing**

Apostles is licensed by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, We are also a 2-star rated center by the Tiered Quality Rated Improvement System (TQRIS or Quality Rated).

## **Philosophy And Mission Statement**

The mission of Apostles Learning Center is to provide parents and the community with a safe, secure environment where their children can grow and develop. At Apostles, we help children thrive in many ways --- physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Our teachers stimulate their students' learning in clean, cheerful classrooms and outdoor settings.

At Apostles Learning Center we believe that “children are a blessing and a gift from the Lord” (Psalm 127:3). We believe each child must be viewed as an individual with unique strengths and abilities. We offer an accredited educational program to prepare them for elementary school. We will provide our students and their families with an ethical, experienced teaching staff who daily exhibit care and concern for children and who demonstrate a strong desire for every student to succeed.

The Staff and Board of Apostles are committed to the growth and success of our students in all areas of development. Our “open door” policy allows for honest communication and support for parents and families.

## **Goals of Apostles Learning Center**

To provide a safe and healthy environment where children and parents can feel trust, comfort and love.

To provide an environment with the highest standards of safety, security, nutrition, classroom curriculum and current technology.

To attract and retain a teaching staff who is dedicated to caring for the well-being of every child, and who challenge their students with fun, stimulating activities.

To provide innovative educational experiences to challenge children in all areas of development and to provide settings to stimulate children's emotional, social, spiritual and physical growth.

To support families by equipping them with tools that will best prepare their children for future development.

## **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is composed of members of the school which make all policy and tuition decisions. The Director(s) of Apostles Learning Center, a staff representative and the immediate past President are non-voting members. To contact the board, please email [board@apostleslearning.com](mailto:board@apostleslearning.com).

## **Staff**

The staff members of Apostles Learning Center are chosen because of their love of children, their commitment to quality child care and continual professional training development, and their experience and training with young children. The enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment of our teaching staff can be witnessed daily through their interaction with the children in their care.

All staff and substitute teachers must be at least eighteen (18) years old and have passed a criminal record check compliant with Bright From the Start requirements. Staff is required to accrue twenty-four (24) hours of professional development training each year and maintain current CPR and First Aid certificates. In addition, newly hired employees participate in an extensive orientation to our Center and must attend training in Disease and Injury Prevention, Health and Safety, and Child Abuse and Reporting.

Education requirements: All Lead Teachers must possess a current certificate (i.e., CDA or higher). GA. Pre-K Lead Teachers must be certified in the State of GA. GA. Pre-K Assistant Teachers have a CDA or higher.

If you arrange with a staff member for off premises or after hours care of your child, the staff member undertakes such services on their own behalf and not as an employee of Apostles Learning Center. ALC offers no assurance of the fitness of the staff member for performing these and other services in an environment which is not professionally supervised.

## **Non-Discriminatory Policy**

Apostles Learning Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational or admissions policies. The Center does not discriminate against children and adults with differing abilities.

We believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

## **Privacy Policy**

The State of Georgia Rules and Regulations Handbook states, "information pertaining to an individual child shall not be disclosed to persons other than the Center staff or other authorized personnel unless the parent(s) has granted written permission or it is an emergency". The Director(s) must approve individual parent-teacher meetings or letters sent to parents regarding their child.

## **Environmental Policy**

Apostles Learning Center enforces a policy of no smoking, tobacco use and use of prohibited substances such as alcohol in the Center buildings and property during hours of operation.

## Reward Program

As a way of saying “thank you” to our parents for referring other families, ALC wants to reward you for bringing others into our Center family. If the referred family enrolls their child(ren), lists you as the contact person who referred them, and they are enrolled for a minimum of six (6) months, the referring parents will receive one (1) free week of tuition for our Infants through Preschool II families. In the event the referring family has more than one child enrolled, the free week will be applied to the oldest child's tuition and auto applied to the next tuition cycle. The blackout date for using the free week will be the weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas.

## Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular hours. Nursing parents are welcome to nurse and feed their infant. Open Door Policy does not mean that our doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

## Registration Process and Documents

Siblings of children already enrolled in the program receive first priority upon availability. Parents are encouraged to place their child on a wait list if there is not a current spot available, especially for Infants or if they have a specific enrollment date in mind. A fee of \$130.00 must accompany the Wait List form to ensure your spot on the waitlist. This fee will be credited toward the annual registration fee when your child is enrolled in our program. If Apostles Learning Center is not able to enroll your child within the requested time period and you wish to remove your child's name from the waiting list, the fee will NOT be refunded.

A child is considered able to begin when all completed documents are returned to the office and parents have met with the Director(s) prior to the start date. The following are the required documents:

1. Enrollment packet
  - a. History & General Information
  - b. Authorization to Dispense out External Preparations
  - c. Emergency Medical & Hospital Form (include a copy of your insurance card as ALC does not carry student insurance)
2. GA. Immunization Form 3231
3. Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental & Nutrition Screening Form #3300 (3 years and older)
4. Acknowledgement of receipt of Parent Handbook
5. Feeding Schedule (Infants only)
6. Acknowledgement of Safe Sleep practices (Infants only)

## Tuition and Fees

Current tuition and fees are provided in the Center enrollment materials. An annual registration fee of \$130.00 is billed in August. If you enrolled after February 1 then you will not have to pay the annual registration fee until the following year.

**Tuition is paid on the 1st and 15th of each month** per the tuition payment schedule.

Tuition is due by 6 p.m. on the 1st and 15th. A three-day grace period shall apply to each tuition cycle, after which a **\$10.00 late payment fee will be assessed in addition to tuition owed**. All tuition payments must be current even if your child was not in attendance. Tuition and fees must be paid by check, money order, Online Bill Pay or ACH (Automated Clearing House). If your tuition is not collected

within 3 business days of the tuition due date, which would include all late fees, then your child may not attend the school until tuition is paid in full. Other fees include:

- Returned Check Fee: \$30.00 for any returned check.
- Wait List Fee: \$130.00 for a year from date of receipt.

## **Delinquent Tuition Policy**

In the event a family's tuition becomes delinquent with an amount equivalent to two tuition cycles, the ALC Director(s) will consider the child(ren) disenrolled, no longer eligible to attend classes and the spot filled with the next family on the waiting list. The ALC Board of Directors does have the authority to grant exceptions, however, as a non-profit, we are highly dependent on our tuition payments to pay our staff and manage our day-to-day expenses.

Should your account become delinquent and result in disenrollment, ALC will send the outstanding balance to a collection agency. Legal fees incurred in the collection of that past due account will be the responsibility of the parent(s).

## **Checking In/Out**

Every morning upon arrival and afternoon upon departure, your child is to be checked in/out on the computer in the lobby area. Please alert anyone bringing or picking up your child of this procedure. When bringing your child to his/her classroom, always communicate with a staff member that your child has arrived.

If someone other than yourself is to pick up your child (even if the name is on the Permission to Pick Up card), please put it in writing and leave the note on the desk in the office. If this person is unknown to the staff, he/she will be required to show a photo I.D.

## **Late Fee Policy**

Our goal is to provide the best possible care for your child. Children become anxious when it is time to go home and no one has come for them. It is not only unfair to the child, but to the teachers as well, as they also have families and commitments. For these reasons, a late pick-up fee policy is enforced:

**\$12.00 fee if pick-up is 6:01-6:15 p.m.**

**\$1.00 additional for every minute late after 6:15 p.m.**

The closing staff will request that you sign a late pick-up form and the fee will be due in cash by the next day or it will be charged to your tuition account.

## **Withdrawal / Temporary Withdrawal Policy**

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from our Center, **a minimum four (4) weeks written notice is required**. If a 4 week notice is not given, then your account will be automatically charged 1 month's tuition. Failure to pay the 1 month tuition by your last day of enrollment may result in legal action.

If you are withdrawing your child temporarily (such as an extended vacation), a payment of one (1) week's tuition for each month that your child is away enables your child to be given priority status and placed on the waitlist for re-enrollment. This does not guarantee space availability at the date you indicate, but the office will make every effort to accommodate your child's return in a timely manner. Please complete a Hold Space Form with your payment giving a minimum of 4 (four) weeks' notice.

# Calendar

Apostles Learning Center will be closed on the following days:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day (Teacher Planning Day)
- Friday of Fulton County Spring Break
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth (recognized on Friday or Monday if holiday falls on a weekend)
- Independence Day (recognized on Friday or Monday if holiday falls on a weekend)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving

In addition to the holidays listed above, ALC recognizes a full week between Christmas Eve and New Years Day. Days off will be recognized in accordance with the schedule below:

Christmas/New Year's Holiday Calendar							
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Christmas Day & New Years Day on Sunday	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Christmas Day & New Years Day on Monday	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
Christmas Day & New Years Day on Tuesday	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
Christmas Day & New Years Day on Wednesday	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
Christmas Day & New Years Day on Thursday	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Christmas Day & New Years Day on Friday	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31	1	2
Christmas Day & New Years Day on Saturday	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	1

Highlighted days indicate the days off

Parents will receive an updated annual calendar.

***There is no discount of tuition for these closings, days that your child is absent/sick or days the Center is closed for inclement weather, natural disasters or other unforeseen closings.***

## **Vacations**

Students are eligible for one (1) tuition-free week per year earned after six (6) months of enrollment. Please submit a vacation request a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance to the office. A child's tuition-free week must be for five (5) consecutive days. Please understand that your child does not attend Apostles Learning Center on the dates you choose for vacation. **The blackout dates for this policy are the week of Thanksgiving and Christmas. During these weeks, no one is allowed to use their free week.**

## **Guidance and Discipline**

Positive behavior management techniques are utilized such as providing a quiet area for self-regulation, praising, rewarding, charting and/or redirecting the child. We endeavor to work as a team in conjunction with the family to develop a Plan of Action to result in a positive change. The school may contact an Inclusion Specialist through Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and/or encourage the parents to seek private assistance.

## **Behavioral Intervention Policy**

To ensure a supportive and constructive environment for all children, we have implemented a clear procedure for addressing recurring adverse behavior. Our goal is to work collaboratively with families to provide appropriate interventions and support.

### **1. Observation and Documentation**

If a child exhibits adverse behavior, the teacher will document the incident and management will notify the parents/caregivers. This includes written documentation providing specific details about the behavior and the actions taken to address it.

### **2. Behavior Monitoring Period**

Should any of the same adverse behaviors continue to occur, a formal intervention process will be initiated. However, the director has the discretion to escalate to a formal intervention process at any time based on their judgement of the severity of the adverse behavior.

### **3. Formal Meeting**

If necessary, a meeting will be scheduled with the director, teacher, and parents/caregivers. This meeting will focus on:

Reviewing documented incidents

Identifying causes or triggers

Developing a clear and actionable behavior plan

Providing resources and/or referrals (e.g., the school may contact an Inclusion Specialist through Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and/or encourage the parents to seek private assistance)

### *Behavior Support Plan*

The behavior support plan will outline:

Specific strategies, including professional help, for managing and redirecting behavior at school and at home

Clear expectations for the child, teacher and parents/caregivers

This support plan will be reassessed after 6 weeks, with discretion given to the director on how often meetings should occur, ranging from weekly check-ins to a follow-up meeting to review progress.

Our shared goal is to ensure every child has the support they need to succeed in a positive learning environment.

## **Disenrollment Policy**

The school reserves the right to disenroll a child after documentation and conferences involving the child's teacher, parent(s) and school administrator. The following reasons may result in disenrollment:

1. Failure to provide documentation and/or records required by Bright from the Start.
2. Disruptive or aggressive behavior of parent or child that compromises the safety of the school population or him or herself.
3. The school is unable to meet the developmental needs of the child.
4. Noncompliance with Center policies (such as paying tuition), Bright from the Start or Georgia Pre-K policies.
5. Parent behavior deemed inappropriate by review of the Board of Directors and Directors (i.e. theft, fraud, violence, mistreatment of staff etc.)

## Programs

Apostles Learning Center operates year round from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. providing care and education for children beginning at 6 weeks.

Playball, Science and Music Enrichment are part of our program. Our full-day program provides a comprehensive and developmentally appropriate learning experience thematically based upon the Georgia Early Learning Development Standards (GELDS). Weekly lesson plans are posted outside the classrooms.

Class schedules are designed to give children opportunities for growth in the various areas of development. Group time, center time, language and literacy, math readiness, science, art, cooking, gross and fine motor activities and naptime are incorporated into the day. Our staff-to-child ratio meets or exceeds standards set by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

All classes have nap or rest time lasting for one (1) to two (2) hours depending on the age and needs of each child. Apostles Learning Center provides bedding that is laundered daily in the Infants classrooms and weekly in all other classrooms. Parents should provide a light blanket for their child's use (excluding those enrolled in the Infant classes), small enough to fit in their child's cubbie, a complete change of clothing, diapers/pull-ups and wipes (if not "potty trained") and a non-porous bag for outerwear.

## Naptime

The following classes have appointed times for naptime. Naptime follows lunch activities of eating, conversing, cleaning, and preparing sleep cots or mats. Children who do not sleep have quiet time.

Tots	12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Early Preschool	12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Preschool I	12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Preschool II	1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Typically, the thirty minutes after naptime is spent in transition activities while the children begin to wake up. Quiet-time activities (i.e., reading books, using writing materials and playing with fine motor skill manipulatives) are provided for non-nappers.

For infants under twelve (12) months, the following recommendations are followed in accordance with the guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics for safe bedding practices:

- Babies are placed to sleep on their backs instead of their stomachs.
- Only sleep sacks and wearable blankets that fit according to the commercial manufacturer's guidelines (must be provided) and will not slip up around the infant's face may be worn for the comfort of the sleeping infant. **A physician's written authorization is required.**
- Swaddling (manufacturer's guidelines must be provided) will not be permitted, unless a **physician's written statement** authorizing it for a particular time frame and including instructions is provided.
- Baby's head is to remain uncovered during nap.
- No objects will be attached to a crib such as, but not limited to, crib gyms, mobiles, mirrors and mobiles.
- Pillows, quilts, comforters, pillow-like stuffed toys, and other soft products may not be placed in the crib.

## Staff-to-Child Ratios

The staff-to-child ratios at Apostles Learning Center are based upon Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and must be maintained at all times. As an accredited center, ALC exceeds the BFTS ratios:

	BFTS	ALC
Infants (less than one (1) year)	1:6	1:3
One (1) year olds who are walking	1:8	1:4
Two (2) year olds	1:10	1:6
Three (3) year olds	1:15	1:10
Four (4) year olds	1:18	1:11
Five (5) year olds	1:20	1:14

## Infant and Preschool Classes

Children are placed in the various classrooms based on age and stage of development. A child may transfer to the next class provided that space is available and he/she has reached the developmental milestones (parents must be made aware of these milestones) for success in the next level. For example, a child that turns three (3) years old during the year may remain in the Early Preschool (E.P.S.) until he/she is "potty trained" and space is available in the Preschool I classroom.

## Georgia Pre-K

The state-funded Georgia Pre-Kindergarten program is available to children who turn four (4) years old by September 1st of the school year in which they enroll. The program is free for a 6.5 hour day (excluding food costs). Extended Day is available for an additional fee. Through appropriate instructional strategies, our Georgia Pre-K program provides children with the readiness skills necessary for entering kindergarten.

## Summer Camp

Our summer program is available for children ages 4 to 12 years. Activities include character building, team building activities, sports skills, science and cooking activities, and literacy and math enrichment. On-site "field trips" may include Barnyard Friends, Challenge Island and/or Playball. Our low counselor-to-camper ratio provides a well-supervised, safe and fun-filled experience.

## **Transitions**

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

### **From Home to Center**

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet your child's peers and teacher(s) and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time, please share the best communication methods that the teacher(s) may use to reach you.

### **Gradual Enrollment**

One of the best ways to aid in your child's adjustment to ALC is to plan for gradual enrollment, which allows your child extra time to adjust to his/her new environment, and is free of charge.

The transition typically consists of a maximum of two (2) visits prior to the child's first day for a maximum of four (4) hours per day. It is important that your child knows that you are comfortable with the teaching staff. Encourage your child to participate in the classroom activities with other children. Feel free to talk to the teacher(s) in the room so the transition is as smooth as possible for you both.

### **Transition Between Learning Programs**

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. Our school primarily completes transitions 3 times a year - January, May, and August. However, children may transition outside the larger transition periods if appropriate based on your child's needs. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

## **In-Center Enrichment**

In-Center Enrichment is available to all children according to the presentation and appropriateness for their age group. These activities not only broaden the experiences of the children but also help them to learn to receive guests and make them feel welcome. For older children, various "in-house" experiences are scheduled such as visits from a dentist, dental hygienist, veterinarian, fire truck & fire fighters, puppeteers and petting zoos. Some activities, such as ballet and tennis are offered on a pay-for-services basis that parents may choose to have their child participate in that are not part of the curriculum.

### **Field trip guidelines**

According to Apostles Learning Center policy and in order to ensure the safety and security of our students, all field trips are on site on the Center campus.

## **Separating From Parents**

Attending a child development center for the first time can be a frightening experience for a child. Many children cry, cling or balk upon entering the classroom. This behavior can continue for several weeks or can occur at any time, even after the children have settled in happily. Parents find this experience far more unsettling than the children as they usually settle down shortly after entering the classroom. By lingering in the classroom, communicating their distress by words or actions, parents tend to prolong the behavior. If school is presented as a positive experience, children will begin to mirror a parent's trust and confidence.

The teachers are accustomed to handling this separation and they care for the child with care, comfort and patience. We encourage parents to call during the day concerning their child(ren)'s behavior.

## **Reporting Policy**

In compliance with Georgia state law, Apostles is required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family and Children's Services. The Center is also required to report all communicable diseases to Fulton County Health Department and Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

## **How Parents Can Be Involved**

We believe that we are in a working partnership with parents and that two-way communication is the key to this partnership. Apostles Learning Center has an Open Door Policy and parents are welcome to observe our program at any time.

We strive to find ways to involve our parents as an integral part of our program. Family events include parent workshops, Pizza and Pumpkins, Trunk-or-Treat, a Christmas program and Staff Appreciation week.

Throughout the year, there are opportunities for parents to attend different school events, read to the children, do art or cooking projects, or share their traditions during holidays or multi-cultural week. Another way to become involved is to volunteer as a room parent. Room parents coordinate with the Parent Representative from the Board to assist with communicating and organizing classroom and school-wide special events, including holiday celebrations, staff appreciation, festivals and charitable fundraisers. Parents may also want to serve on the Board which requires attendance at a monthly evening meeting, and occasionally, attendance at special school events.

## **Parent-Center Communication**

We welcome and encourage Parent-Center open communication. At ALC, we care about your questions and concerns. Let us know what is on your mind! The Director(s) are available to discuss any concerns you have. Your child's teacher will be able to answer questions about classroom activities and interactions. Monthly school newsletters are sent through the Tadpoles app.

## **Daily Reports**

Daily Reports are provided through email using the Tadpole App.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences occur twice during the year, in the fall and spring semesters. Parents and teachers discuss the progress and stages of your child's development in the 5 domains of the Georgia Early Learning Development Standards (GELDS).

Parents may request to discuss their child's progress at any time throughout the year. Make an appointment through the office and we will be glad to accommodate you.

## **Educational Consultants**

Staff is always available to parents for questions about child development in general or, more specifically, the welfare and development of your child. Acknowledging that each child succeeds, at his/her own pace,

referring your child to a speech therapist or other educational consultants may assist your child's growth and development. These professionals are welcome to perform their services at the school. A satisfactory criminal records check, photo I.D. and parent authorization must be on file.

## Developmental Screening

To coincide with curriculum-based assessments, we monitor each child's achievements of developmental milestones, share observations with parents/guardians, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings, evaluations, and early intervention and treatments. The developmental screening process is a collaborative one, involving parents/guardians and done in conjunction with the child's primary care provider and health, education, and early intervention consultants. ALC uses the CDC Learn the Signs, Act Early check list to screen children from 2 months to 5 years old. Screenings are completed by the teachers if the teacher sees any sign of a delay. Once the screening is complete, the teachers are to bring the results to the Director(s). The Director(s) and parents will then sit down and discuss what was observed.

## Guidelines For Handling Parental Concerns

Parents with a concern regarding the welfare of their child should verbally discuss the problem with the Director. In the event that they (parents and Director) do not reach an agreeable solution, or the Director does not follow through with satisfactory action on the agreement reached within ten (10) working days, the parent may outline the grievance, in writing, to the Director with copies to the School Board President. In the event that an agreeable solution is not reached by both the Director and the School Board President, the parent may formally present the grievance, in writing, to the full Board for resolution of the problem. The solution determined by the full Board will be considered as **final** with no further action by the Board of Directors.

## Personal Items

Each child is required to have at least one complete, seasonally appropriate change of clothes left at the Center. Parents must label clothes and shoes with the child's name. If your child is prone to bathroom accidents or is "potty training," please provide more than one change of clothes.

Closed, flat shoes (athletic style shoes or sneakers with socks) are the safest footwear on the playground. To ensure your child's safety, Crocs, Jellies, flip flops, open toe/heel shoes, sandals, boots or shoes with smooth leather soles are not allowed.

Parents of Infants must provide the child's own food and/or bottles labeled clearly with the date and child's name. These items must be pre-measured for individual use. Parents of children in diapers are required to provide all necessary wipes, diapers, and diaper rash creams (a signed permission to apply form must be completed).

Although the teachers make every effort to keep lost items to a minimum, make sure all items are clearly labeled with your child's name. If your child brings something home that does not belong to him/her, please return it to school so that we may find its owner. The Center does not replace lost or stolen items.

Items such as toys, lip balms, sunglasses, etc. are not permitted in the classroom. As per Quality Rated requirements, backpacks or diaper bags are not allowed in the classroom. **An open bag is required to store the child's outerwear.**

## Meals and Nutrition

Nutritious breakfasts, lunches and snacks are included with tuition for all children over twelve (12) months of age. The meal schedule is as follows:

- Breakfast is served at 8:30 a.m.
- Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. for Tots and Early Preschool, 11:45 a.m. for Preschool I & II, and 12:00 p.m. for Georgia Pre-K
- Snack is provided at 3:00 p.m. for Tots through Preschool II and Extended Day classes
- A secondary snack is provided for those children still at school at 5pm each day

Prior to meals, children and staff must wash their hands. Staff wears plastic food serving gloves and/or washes their hands when serving meals.

Parents of Infants must provide the child's own food and/or bottles labeled clearly with the date and child's name. These items must be pre-measured for individual use. For the safety of our staff and infants, glass containers are not allowed.

Sound nutrition for growing children is very important, both for physical and intellectual development. Our menu provides a balanced variety of foods each day. Children are encouraged but not forced to try various kinds of fruits, vegetables, breads and protein sources. Menus for meals and snacks are posted in the lobby. Our meals are planned according to the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program, USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

We recognize that some children may be unable to eat certain foods due to allergies, dietary restrictions or religious beliefs. We will work with those families to provide the appropriate meals and snacks as long as it is within our capacity. Otherwise, parents are to provide those items that are needed in order to meet nutritional requirements. State licensing requires that a child who must have a modified diet for medical reasons must have a statement from a medical authority on file. Modifications for religious reasons require a written statement to that effect from the child's parent(s). Modified diets must meet daily USDA regulations and guidelines. Parents of a child who has any dietary restrictions supplement and/or provide those food items required to meet his/her nutritional needs. All food items must be labeled with the child's name, date and contents.

**No peanut butter or nut products may be brought to the Center due to the serious nature of nut allergies.**

## Birthday Parties / Special Events

Parents may wish to bring in cupcakes or other treats to celebrate their child's birthday. As a Quality Rated center, Apostles Learning Center adheres to the following guidelines:

- Items must be store-bought with full ingredient listings included so we may review for any potential allergies.
- Caregivers shall not offer children under 4 years of age foods that are implicated in choking incidents (round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth or slippery). Examples of these foods are hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), raw carrot rounds or baby carrots, whole grapes, lollipops, hard candy, seeds, raw peas, stick or log pretzels, chips, popcorn, marshmallows, sticky chewable items such as gummy bears, taffy, caramel, Tootsie Rolls and chunks of cheese or meat.
- **No peanut butter or nut products may be served at the Center due to the serious nature of nut allergies.** This policy pertains to foods that are also provided by parents.
- Alternatives such as fruit, crackers, cheese, vegetables with dip, pudding, ice cream are possible suggestions. Parents are welcome to provide birthday plates, napkins, cups and hats.
- Age appropriate goodie bags may be prepared to send home with all the children in the class.

Any special activities must be communicated to the office before planning.

## School Pictures

Individual and class pictures are taken by a professional company during the year for all children enrolled and in attendance on the scheduled picture days. There is no obligation for you to purchase the pictures.

Photos may be taken for Center use (website, social media, bulletin boards, cards, gifts to the parents, etc.). Parents are also welcome to take photos of their child's class for personal remembrances. Please inform the Center, **in writing, if you choose not to allow your child's photos to be used in this matter.**

## Animals / Pets

At ALC, we recognize that caring about animals is part of the learning experience. Some classrooms may have class pets (i.e. fish, caterpillars etc.) All animals shall be confined to cages, pens or other containers that have a secure cover. Animals must be properly vaccinated. No animal may have a vicious propensity or pose a hazard to children.

## Inclement Weather

In case of school closing, parents are notified through the Tadpole App. You will receive an email and text message to the number and email that was provided when you enrolled. It is imperative that the office is notified of changes to this information.

*Note: There may be occasions when Apostles Learning Center is open and the Fulton County Schools remain closed.*

## Infection Control, Illness Policies, and Accidents

To reduce transmission of germs and infection, we use a bleach/water spray on all tables before and after each snack or meal. In rooms where the children mouth the toys, they are sterilized daily. In other classrooms, all toys are sterilized on a regular basis. Bedding is washed and mats/cots are sanitized weekly (unless a potty accident) in Tots through Georgia Pre-K and daily in the Infant rooms.

In Infants I through EPS classrooms, the diaper changing table is wiped after each use with bleach/water solution (this solution is made fresh daily) and a new diaper changing paper is used for each child. In addition, our staff wears a clean pair of latex gloves whenever changing a child.

Frequent hand washing is an important part of our disease prevention and control. It is mandatory that children, parents and teachers wash their hands upon entering the classroom. Hand washing occurs throughout the day (for example, but not limited to) during transition from activities, playing with sand/water, when sneezing and/or coughing, before and after meals, when handling or serving food, after wiping noses, after using the bathroom, after changing a child (even when gloves are used), between caring for individual infants, upon administering First Aid (even when gloves are used).

We strive to keep infections from spreading throughout the classes and the Center. You are part of the infection control policy. Your child must be kept from school until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours after any of these communicable illnesses or with a note from a doctor confirming the child is no longer contagious:

- Fever of 100 degrees or greater
- Diarrhea

- Vomiting
- Rashes or boils
- Discolored mucus
- Uncontrollable coughing
- Conjunctivitis / “Pink Eye”
- Coxsackie A-16 virus (Hand, Foot and Mouth Virus)
- Head lice
- Signs of common childhood diseases

**If your child develops any of the above symptoms during the day, you will be called to come and pick up your child within one (1) hour and remove him/her from the Center.** Your child will be comforted and cared for in the classroom’s cozy corner or library until your arrival (this does not apply to Infants). We often call a parent to alert you of the possible onset of illness (i.e. your child has been pulling on his/her ear or perhaps cries continuously during the day). If your child is lethargic and unable to participate in school activities, please consider keeping your child at home to ensure your child’s health. **Please call the Center at 404-256-3091 to let us know if your child has an illness which is infectious. We will alert other parents in your child’s class or in the Center of the illness. Children may return to school with a doctor’s note stating that they are not contagious.**

Research clearly shows that it is better for children to have outdoor time than to remain inside all the time. Please trust our judgment as to what is too cold, too windy, too rainy or even too hot for the children. If the children are properly dressed for the weather, they will benefit from being outdoors. A child may be excused from outdoor activities for a limited period of time if there is documentation that outdoor activity is medically contraindicated by a doctor’s note.

Accidents, observations and incidents will be reported to you in writing on the appropriate form. You will be required to sign the form and one will be placed in your child’s file. You will be called immediately if your child has an accident which results in a head injury. If an accident occurs that we feel requires immediate care, you will be called to participate in any emergency decisions. If ALC feels that emergency care is necessary, we will call 911 first and then you. The child will be transported to Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta on Johnson Ferry Road, which is near our Center.

## **COVID-19**

Individuals with COVID-19 are allowed to return to school 5 days after symptom onset or a positive test (whichever came first) AND being fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. Additional guidance will be made as needed at the discretion of the Director and Board, based on recommendations made by the CDC and the Georgia Department of Public Health.

## **Medications**

If your child requires a prescription medication administered while at Apostles Learning Center, an office staff member is the designated person to do so (this does not apply to those children enrolled in the Infant rooms). Medication forms must be completely filled out for each individual day that the prescription medicine is to be administered (please note licensing regulations do not allow the use of arrows or ditto marks on medication forms). Medications must be in the original, labeled containers, and be clearly marked with the child’s full name. No medication will be administered without a signed Medication Authorization Form or on an “as needed basis”. Over the counter medication such as cough medication, Tylenol, aspirin or other temperature lowering medication may not be administered.

***All prescription medications must be accompanied by the pharmaceutical instructions for the illness/condition for which the medication is prescribed, including dosage information, generic name and side effects/adverse reactions.***

After fully completing the Authorization to Dispense Medication Form (located in the manila envelope on the bulletin board behind the check in/out computer), place it in the folder labeled with your child's class located in the office. Your child's labeled medication is stored in the left cabinet marked "Medication" in the Resource Room. Licensing requires us to dispose of any medication that is not administered. In other words, we cannot store any medicine past the dates it is meant to be administered. Please take any unused medication home.

### **Procedure for Administering Medications to Children**

1. Parents fill out a "Medical Authorization Form for Children" and submit it to the office.
2. Medication will be administered only once during the day during lunch time (this does not pertain to inhalers for asthma).
3. Administrative Staff member charts child's name, medication, dosage and time(s) in the Medication Log in the office, and places parent's form in the appropriate classroom file folder.
4. Admin staff member calls children to the office at specified time(s) to receive medication.
5. Admin staff member verifies in the Medication Log that medicine has been administered.

### **Security and Emergency Procedures**

Security is of utmost importance at ALC, and the following features and systems have been installed:

- Ring camera at front entrance
- Computerized check-in and check-out.
- Secured entry ways including pass-only door between Church and school.
- Six-foot fencing along the rear of the playground.
- Bright outdoor lighting.
- Staff member present at the receptionist desk from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### **Fire Evacuation Plan**

When the fire alarm sounds, Tots (C108) and EPS (C105) exit by the 1st floor fire escape; Preschool I (C103) and Preschool II (C106) exit through the front entrance door.

Georgia Pre-K (C 202/204) and Extended Day / Camp (C207) (located on the 2nd floor) exit through the rear fire exit stairway.

Infants I children are put into evacuation cribs and Infants II children in the stroller. The school nutritionist is assigned to assist the teachers. All classes exit through the double doors / ramp in the Fellowship Hall.

All classes will assemble along the fence by the soccer field. Teachers must have class attendance records, and the teacher at the end of the line is to shut off lights and close the classroom door.

### **Severe Storm Plan**

In case of tornado or other severe storm, classes on each floor are to go to the hallway on that floor, kneel down, face the wall and clasp their hands over their heads. Infants I children are placed in evacuation cribs and Infants II children in the Bye Bye Buggy or stroller. Teachers are to place children against the wall in the hallway by the classroom. Stay away from the windows and doors.

### **Structural Damage Plan**

In the event of structural damage, children will be evacuated to the ALC soccer field.

## Acknowledgement of Receipt of Parent Handbook



Apostles Learning Center  
6025 Glenridge Drive, Building C  
Sandy Springs, GA 30328  
Phone: 404-256-3091  
Fax: 404-250-1775  
Email: [office@apostleslearning.com](mailto:office@apostleslearning.com)  
Website: [www.apostleslearning.com](http://www.apostleslearning.com)

Apostles Lutheran Child Development Center d/b/a Apostles Learning Center (also referred to as "the Center") and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) acknowledge having received the Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures as stated.

I also certify that I have provided complete information regarding my child and will notify the Center as changes occur.

Print Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted by:

Parent or Guardian (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Change Log

Date Handbook Reissued	Updated Language
April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated tuition cycle to align to current plan</li><li>• Added section regarding delinquent payments</li><li>• Updated calendar to account for Juneteenth &amp; clearly defined holiday schedule</li><li>• Minor changes to additional sections</li></ul>