



Family Handbook

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Dear Parents,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Coral Reef Academy! You have made an excellent choice for your child's early education and care.

This Family Handbook is created to familiarize you with Coral Reef Academy's policies and procedures. The handbook lays out the center's responsibilities as well as the responsibilities of our families. We encourage you to read each section carefully before signing your acknowledgement page and returning it to the Director.

The Director of the program enforces the policies outlined in our Handbook for the legal and financial protection of the center, as well as the overall health, safety, and best interest of the children we serve. The policies in this Handbook apply to all parents. Please keep the handbook available for future reference. Thank you for entrusting us with your child and we look forward to a long lasting relationship with you!

Welcome to our school family,

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VISION STATEMENT

CORAL REEF ACADEMY is an exemplary childcare program and preschool. Our services focus on developmentally appropriate practices in the areas of cognitive, physical, social-emotional, creative, and academic skills. CORAL REEF ACADEMY maintains excellence in care while keeping prices for families affordable.

CORAL REEF ACADEMY will share with parents the vital role of caring for and educating their children; focusing on developing a sense of trust, security and love.

CORAL REEF ACADEMY will provide an environment rich in experiences where nature and natural beauty are respected and admired. We will provide an environment that is diverse and strive to maintain a respectful, caring atmosphere at all times.

CENTER PHILOSOPHY

CORAL REEF ACADEMY provides the appropriate environment and opportunity for the physical, social, and cognitive development of children. Our centers and curriculum are designed to stimulate growth through a balance of both teacher-guided and self-directed activities. Each child is given the opportunity for individual development and exploration through an environment that is creative, stimulating and safe.

CENTER GOALS

CORAL REEF ACADEMY offers opportunities for each child to grow cognitively, emotionally, and socially while becoming aware of their surroundings and abilities. This is accomplished through carefully planned activities, which stimulate the child's natural curiosity and aids each child in the development of an excellent foundation for creative learning.

CORAL REEF ACADEMY will create an environment that fosters opportunities for the development of the child in the areas of: Physical Developmental, Approaches to Learning, Social-Emotional Development, Language/Communication, Emergent Literacy, and Cognitive Development/General Knowledge.

AGES SERVED/ENROLLMENT

We accept children regardless of race, creed, and religious affiliation or economic status. CORAL REEF ACADEMY is licensed by the state of Florida to serve children between the ages of six weeks and 12 years; children are divided according to their ages. We adhere to the state regulated teacher/child ratios. The ratios for the state of Florida are: Infants – 1:4, Ones- 1:6, Twos- 1:11, Three's- 1:15, Fours-1:20, School Age, 1:25.

Children are enrolled until maximum capacity is reached in the classroom, at which point they will be put on a waiting list. Families will be called off the waiting list when space is available and must give the center an enrollment decision generally within a 24-hour period or the next child on the waiting list will be offered the spot.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Coral Reef Academy is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm. The center is open year-round with the exception of the following holidays:

- New Years Eve Closed
- New Years Day (or the day federally observed if the holiday falls on a weekend)
- Memorial Day
- Good Friday (Varies between March/April)
- Independence Day (or the day federally observed if the holiday falls on a weekend)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day (or the day federally observed if the holiday falls on a weekend)
- One additional day for Christmas which may vary by year (generally Christmas Eve)

The center is also closed three additional days per year for in-service training (days vary by year and will be chosen from the following days):

- Martin Luther King Day (January)
- Presidents' Day (February)
- Veterans Day (November)

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY AT CORAL REEF ACADEMY

On your child's first day of school you will want to plan to arrive early to help them get settled in their classroom.

All infants are asked to come with:

- Disposable Diapers
- Formula or breastmilk in "ready to feed" bottles *staff at CRA are not permitted to mix formula or transfer contents of one bottle or storage container to another
- Diaper rash ointment if needed
- Baby Wipes marked with your child's name
- Sleep Sack (State regulation no longer allows blankets in the cribs)
- Additionally any other items such as juice, cereal, baby food (if not using the center foods), pacifiers, etc. all marked with your child's name.

All toddlers (age 1-2) are asked to come with:

- Disposable Diapers or Pull ups
- Diaper rash ointment if needed
- Baby Wipes marked with your child's name
- Nap time blanket & fitted crib-size sheet(Please take home and wash every Friday)
- 2 changes of clothes
- Close toed shoes

All children ages 2 and up are asked to come with:

- Diapers or pull ups if not toilet trained (Please note: in order to be enrolled in or to transition to our 3 year old program children must be toilet trained and out of pullups completely)
- Two (2) complete sets of clothing to stay at the center in case of accidents; including underwear
- A small blanket & fitted crib-size sheet for rest time (Please take home and wash every Friday)
- Close toed shoes

Because of the variety of activities the children engage in daily, children should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable and appropriate for play. It should be easy to take on and off so the children can be as independent as possible.

Please provide close-toed shoes that are not slippery or hard to run and play in. Tennis shoes work the best. **Please do not send your children in with beads in their hair or jewelry.** Small objects like beads and jewelry are choking hazards. Jewelry may also be easily damaged and sometimes may be hazardous during active play. CRA is not responsible for any lost or damaged jewelry.

Forms that must be completed before your child's first day:

- Application for enrollment form
- Free and reduced lunch form (for all families, even if over income, updated and signed every August after initial enrollment)
- From the doctor: Physical and Shot Record, Allergy Action Plan (for children with severe allergies), and Care Plan (for children with special needs)

*Physicals need to be updated bi-annually and shot records as listed on the form. All forms must be Florida forms.

- Nail Trimming form
- Photography Release form
- Emergency Medical Release form
- Child Profile Form
- Financial Agreement Form
- Influenza Information Brochure (signed every August after initial enrollment)
- Handbook acknowledgement form (at the back of this booklet)
- Distracted driver brochure (signed every April and September after initial enrollment)

Confidentiality: In order to respect the privacy of each family, all records are kept confidential and available only to authorized Coral Reef Staff Members. Records are kept in an unlocked cabinet and cannot be shared with an outside agency without parental permission. Parents may request to see their child's records at any time.

SIGN IN AND OUT

Each parent will be assigned an identification code that will allow the parent to sign their child in upon arrival, and out when the child is picked up. This code can be found in the ProCare app. Each code is unique for that parent and we ask that you **please do not share this code** with any other person. We will sign your child out if the student is being picked up by someone who does not regularly pick the child up.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Arrival: The morning schedule in each classroom is designed specifically to aid in the daily transition from home to school and to allow as much flexibility as possible to individual families. **Therefore, it is required that children arrive at the center each morning before 9:00 a.m. *Including infants and toddlers.** This allows teachers the freedom to greet each arriving child and parent, aid in the child's transition into the activity of the class according to his/her arrival style, and aid in the good-bye process.

Should you be unavoidably late, please notify the Center prior to 9:00 a.m. Parents must escort their child into the classroom each day and help the child settle into an activity. Do not leave children in the lobby or hallways. Please make contact with the teacher or staff in charge to ensure your child is being acknowledged and signed in!

Departure: A child may be released only to those persons authorized in writing by the parent. Each family will be required to complete an Authorization and Consent Form listing all such persons. This permission form should be updated when necessary throughout the school year. The Center will refuse the release of a child to any person other than those on file. Teachers will also ask to see identification for any person they have not met before, even if their name is on file. Parents must also notify the teachers in advance when an authorized person will be picking up their child. If your family has made shared arrangements for pick-up with another family in the event of lateness, please make sure each family is authorized on the other's form and the teachers are aware of this arrangement. For your child's safety, please be patient with us as we take the above precautions. We will not release children to anyone under the age of 16 unless accompanied by an adult. In addition, it is extremely important that parents make verbal contact with the child's teacher upon arrival to pick up the child.

Authorized Pick-up: Parents generally share parental responsibility for major decisions affecting their child, including educational placement, unless a court order states otherwise. If a child's parents or legal guardians do not reside in the same household, the registering parent or legal guardian (the individual who completes and signs the enrollment paperwork) is responsible for providing accurate custody information at the time of enrollment. The school does not mediate parental disputes and will follow the most current court-issued legal documentation on file. Families must provide copies of any applicable legal documents at enrollment or immediately upon issuance, including but not limited to:

- Parenting Plans
- Custody or time-sharing orders
- Orders granting sole or ultimate decision-making authority
- Injunctions, restraining orders, or supervised visitation orders

In the absence of a court order limiting parental rights, both parents are presumed to have parental responsibility. Unless a parent has been legally restricted or prohibited from contact with or removal of the child, both parents must be listed on the enrollment form for record-keeping and compliance purposes. Listing a parent does not automatically grant pickup authorization.

Only individuals listed on the child's Authorized Pickup List may remove a child from the school. Authorized pickup permissions must align with any court orders on file. If a conflict exists between enrollment forms and legal documentation, court orders will take precedence. The school will not deny a parent access to their child unless legally required to do so by written court order.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to notify the school promptly of any changes to custody, parental responsibility, or pickup authorization and to provide updated documentation. For the safety and consistency of our program, all individuals listed on a child's Authorized Pickup List must be mutually agreed upon by all parents and legal guardians with parental responsibility, unless a court order states otherwise. Repeated additions or removals of individuals from the Authorized Pickup List are not permitted. The school reserves the right to limit or deny frequent changes to ensure the safety, consistency, and operational integrity of the program.

The school is not authorized to interpret legal documents or determine parental rights beyond what is expressly stated in court orders. In cases of uncertainty, the school may require clarification or additional documentation before making changes to enrollment or release permissions.

Late Pick up: There are no late pick-up options available at the center, as our license to offer care ends at 6pm. If your child has not been picked up within 5 minutes of closing, and you have not called to let us know about the delay, we will begin calling the emergency contacts on file. Families who pick-up after 6pm will incur a late fee of \$1.00 per minute per child. If the child has not been picked up by 6:45pm and no one has been reachable, the Department of Children and Families and the Melbourne Police Department will be called. Late pick-up will lead to disenrollment from the program at the discretion of the Center Director.

Absenteeism: If your child is going to be absent, please notify the center prior to 9:15 a.m. It is important that all children attend school on a regular basis, as frequent absences disrupt their daily routine and make it difficult for them to benefit fully from the curriculum.

FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION

Field Trips: Field trips are an integral part of our preschool, VPK, and school-age program. Many field trips are local and will be taken on a Coral Reef Academy bus. Parents of school-age children will be asked to sign a blanket permission slip for local field trips upon enrollment. Parents of

preschool and VPK children will be given specific authorization forms when field trips are scheduled. All permission slips are kept on file. Private vehicles will never be used to transport children on field trips. In the case of late arrival/missed field trip departure, parents are not permitted to meet the class at the field trip site. Infants and toddlers do not attend field trips.

School Age Transportation: Transportation to and from select elementary schools in the area is arranged for the school age children in our program. Children under the age of six are required to provide a booster seat that must remain on the van for the duration of the school year, or until the child turns six years old. A Transportation Consent form must be completed prior to transportation services being provided. All consent forms are kept on file.

Transportation/Field Trip Emergency Procedures: Each group will carry a set of emergency contact numbers and a center cell phone with them on all field trips. In the event of an emergency, the teachers will contact the nearest rescue squad, the parent and the center. A teacher would accompany the child to the nearest facility and would remain until full care has been given. The Center requires that all children riding the vans must wear their safety belts at all times. A first violation of this policy will result in a verbal warning, a second violation will result in a phone call home, and a third violation will result in suspension from the van.

VPK PROGRAM

Coral Reef Academy offers a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten(VPK) program which allows parents to enroll his or her eligible child in a free program designed to prepare four year olds for kindergarten. We offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum designed to promote children's knowledge in all areas of development. VPK students are assessed three times throughout the school year. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers with information that can be used to guide instructional activities to promote children's development of important readiness skills and monitor children's progress in attaining the skills in the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards. These assessments are kept on file.

TUITION

The following financial policies are written to ensure that quality childcare is consistently available. Please read them carefully. We ask that you do not request special payment arrangements, as it is imperative that we adhere to a fair and equal tuition policy for all families.

The fee amount has been determined based on the cost of providing quality services, materials, supplies, equipment, meals and well-qualified, educated teachers. The tuition rates are adjusted annually and parents will receive advance notice of any changes in the weekly tuition rates.

Registration Fees: There is a non-refundable registration fee per child at the time of enrollment. Annually after the initial registration, there is a \$50 materials fee that is charged per family every September 1.

Tuition is due on Monday morning **before** you take your child to their classroom, for the current week. Please give your tuition directly to the center director or pay via the ProCare app. Please remember that we rely on our tuition to pay our staff and meet other financial obligations so it is important to pay tuition when it is due.

Please note the payment schedule that is firmly enforced.

Payment made on:	
Monday	Regular Tuition
Tuesday	After 12pm - Regular Tuition <i>PLUS</i> \$10 Late Charge
Wednesday	Children will NOT be accepted unless payment has been made.

We cannot hold a child's space in a classroom when tuition has not been paid. **Payment remains the same whether the child is in attendance or not, as the child's placement in the classroom has been reserved.** Holiday closings do not change the weekly tuition rate. Other reasons for closure such as in the event of severe weather or other natural disasters do not change the weekly tuition rate (unless otherwise specified).

The only accepted methods of payment are cash, credit card, money order, or auto draft payment from a bank account or credit card via Tuition Express. We do not accept checks as of September 1, 2017.

For families who receive subsidized childcare/ELC, an overage fee per child will be charged in addition to the weekly copay as outlined in the ELC contract and Coral Reef Academy's policy. Families on the ELC program wishing to take a vacation week are still required to pay their ELC co-pay. However, Coral Reef Academy overage will be deducted for that week. **We charge excessive absence fees for families on ELC. If your child misses more than 3 days in a month, you will be responsible for these fees.**

Other tuition Related Policies: Families who are delinquent in their payments repeatedly will be dismissed from the program.

Diapered children are required to provide diapers and wipes. If your child runs out and CRA has to supply these items, a fee of \$3.00 per wipes pack and \$5.00 per 4 diapers will be charged.

We offer a 10% discount on tuition to the oldest child in those families who are enrolling more than one student.

A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed if your child is at the center after closing or after your scheduled pick up time (part time children)

Vacation Policy: Regular tuition is due each week. There are no credits or refunds given for the holidays, closures, or missed days. After your child has been enrolled at the center for 90 days, you are entitled to two weeks of tuition free vacation. Vacation time is extended to families who are enrolled full time at our center. To assist us in staffing, you are required to notify the director in writing of your plans at least one week in advance. Vacation days may only be taken in weekly increments (Monday through Friday only) and your child may not attend for any days in the week in order to use it as a vacation. In the case of extended illness (one week or longer in duration) vacation time may be used. Our two week vacation policy cannot be used in place of a two week disenrollment notice.

Non-instructional VPK & Public School Closures: On days or weeks when public school or VPK is not in session, families requiring full-time care for their child will incur an additional fee. This fee covers the extended hours and services provided during these times and is not included in the standard weekly tuition.

CURRICULUM

CORAL REEF ACADEMY uses the Creative Curriculum in conjunction with the Florida Early Learning Standards. The program utilizes standards and objectives for development and learning to guide instruction and assist teachers in assessing the progress of all children. The curriculum is a year round program, with monthly units of study/inquiry that all age groups participate in. Lesson plans are posted in the classroom on the Parent Board.

CORAL REEF ACADEMY also uses Conscious Discipline as the social/emotional curriculum.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are the first and most lasting influence upon how a child feels about herself/himself. Child care is a shared process, and we encourage you to share in the day-to-day activities of the center; meals, field trips and class visits. We would like you to share your ideas, culture, and traditions with us as well. You are an important piece of our community and are welcomed into the center and classroom at any time. Parents are also welcomed to request a conference at any time; we recommend at least two per year. We also encourage regular communication between parents and

teachers or Center Director. We do ask, however, that concerns not be discussed in front of your child.

As your child will be spending a major portion of his/her days at the center, we want to make sure that parents are kept informed of all that is happening both in the classrooms and the center. A monthly newsletter is distributed which includes upcoming activities, and field trips or special guests. Daily Reports will be automatically emailed to families upon pick up each day, as it is sometimes hard to speak to each parent daily about their child's day. We hope that these reports will keep you informed of the general issues of your child's day and that you will encourage your child to tell you about his/her day. In general young children often respond to global questions such as "what did you do today?" with "I don't know". Often it is more effective to ask specific questions such as "What did you make in art today?" or "What songs did you sing today?" If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to discuss them with your child's teacher or the Center Director at a time that is convenient for everyone.

We welcome suggestions that you may have at any time. Parents are welcome to participate in the overall planning of our program and are encouraged to be a part of the parent advisory committee at the center. Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time or to accompany us on a field trip for special events. We have an Open Door Policy and encourage parents to be a part of their child's daily routine.

Parent Code of Conduct

At Coral Reef Academy, the safety, well-being, and dignity of our children, families, and staff are our highest priorities. We are committed to maintaining a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment where everyone feels valued and supported.

To foster a positive school community, parents and guardians are expected to communicate and interact with staff, children, and other families in a respectful, courteous, and appropriate manner at all times.

The following behaviors are not permitted on school property, during school events, or in any communication related to the school:

- Threatening, intimidating, or abusive language or behavior directed toward staff, children, parents, or visitors.
- Harassment, discrimination, bullying, or verbal abuse of any kind.
- Aggressive, confrontational, or disruptive behavior that interferes with the safe operation of the school.
- Profanity, yelling, or any conduct that creates a hostile or unsafe environment.

We understand that questions, concerns, and disagreements may arise from time to time. We encourage parents and guardians to address concerns calmly and respectfully by speaking directly

with the appropriate teacher or the Center Director. Our staff is committed to listening, working collaboratively, and resolving concerns in a professional and constructive manner.

Any behavior that threatens the safety or well-being of our children, families, or staff will be taken seriously. Coral Reef Academy reserves the right to take appropriate action, which may include requesting that an individual leave the premises, limiting access to the center, contacting law enforcement when warranted, or, in severe or repeated cases, terminating enrollment.

By working together with mutual respect and professionalism, we can provide the safe, nurturing, and positive learning environment that every child deserves.

APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE AND COMMUNICATION

At Coral Reef Academy, we are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all children. Physical punishment is not permitted on the premises. While parents may use verbal guidance with their own child, language that is harsh, threatening, or demeaning is not appropriate, as it may cause embarrassment or emotional distress.

Parents are not permitted to discipline or correct a child who is not their own. If you observe a concern involving another child, or if your child shares a concern with you, we ask that you bring this information to the classroom teacher or Center Director. Our staff will address the situation in a timely and appropriate manner.

We also ask that parents do not approach or engage other families regarding behavioral concerns. This helps us maintain a respectful and positive community for everyone.

Please understand that, while we take all concerns seriously, we are unable to share details about other children due to confidentiality policies. Every child and family in our care has a right to privacy. You can be assured that any concerns brought forward will be handled thoughtfully and with care, and that your child's information will always be treated with the same level of confidentiality.

We are always here to partner with you and welcome conversations about your child's development, behavior, and positive guidance strategies.

SMOKING/ALCOHOL/DRUG USE: For the health of all Coral Reef Academy employees, children and associates, smoking, alcohol, and drug use is prohibited anywhere on our property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of Coral Reef Academy. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.

VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY: Parents are required to follow all safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed not as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children and associates of Coral Reef Academy. Please be particularly mindful of Coral Reef Academy entrance procedures. We all like to be polite. However, we need to be careful to not allow unauthorized individuals into the center. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact, be polite; however that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Center Director.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

Coral Reef Academy admits students of any race, sex, creed, color, religion, nationality, abilities and ethnic origin to enjoy all the rights, privileges, and programs accorded or made available to students at our school. We do not discriminate. We value having a diverse population in our school.

EMERGENCY/HEALTH CARE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Procedures for Illness or Emergency: The center must have a record of telephone numbers for each parent and another adult who would respond in case of an emergency, and for the family's pediatrician or other doctor. Any change in the emergency telephone must be reported to the center immediately. It is imperative that up-to-date numbers be maintained, for the safety and well being of your child. CORAL REEF ACADEMY has access to a medical consultant if any questions need to be clarified.

In the Event of Illness: If a child becomes ill during the day, the center director will contact a parent. The child will be in an area in the front office separated from other children where he/she can rest until the parent is able to pick up the child. Though we know it may be difficult to rearrange schedules due to sudden illness, it will be necessary for a parent to pick up a child as soon as possible after being contacted— within one hour. Teachers will notify a parent when a child looks or behaves in a way that is clearly different than normal. Examples of this are: when a child appears unusually tired, pale, seems confused, irritable, indicates pain, fever, discomfort, distress, or exhibits inconsolable crying. If a parent can not be reached, one of the emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency card will be called. The center will care for mildly ill children as long as they are able to function within the classroom.

The decision to exclude a child from the center is made by the center director. Symptoms leading to exclusion include but are not limited to: vomiting, fever exceeding 99.4° taken under the arm, skin rashes or open sores, unusual lethargy and head lice/nits. Once excluded, a doctor's note may be required to return at the discretion of the director, based on symptoms and potential exposure to communicable illness. A family's refusal to pick up an ill child within a reasonable amount of time is grounds for termination from the program.

Please do not send your child to the center if you feel that your child is too sick to go outside to play or join in on normal activities. This is best for your child, and helps to prevent the spread of illness.

Below are some additional illnesses that affect children and may require exclusion:

Fever	When accompanied by behavior changes, stiff neck, difficulty breathing, rash, sore throat, and/or other signs or symptoms of illness; or the child is unable to participate in normal activities. We use the temperature measurement before fever reducing medications are given. Auxiliary (armpit) temperature: 99.4 degrees F or higher. Oral temperature: 100.4 degrees F or higher. Child may return after being 24 hours fever free.
Diarrhea	Children will be sent home at the discretion of the Director if they have diarrhea episodes and can return 24 hours after diarrhea stops or until medical exam indicates that it is not due to communicable disease (diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools compared with a person's normal pattern, along with decreased stool form and/or watery, bloody, or mucus containing stools. Parents will be called to come and pick up their child after three diarrhea diapers.
Vomiting	Parents will be called to come and pick up their child after one vomiting episode. Children can return 24 hours after the last vomiting episode.
Eye Drainage	(Pink eye) - 24 hours after treatment has started when thick mucus or pus drainage is present.
Chicken Pox	Child may return if all sores are dry or scabbed or 6 days after rash began. Do not give aspirin to any child or adolescent under 18 years of age, unless directed by the doctor.
Fifth Disease	If other rash-causing illnesses are ruled out, there is no need to exclude. Pregnant women who are exposed need to consult their doctor.
Head Lice	

Child may return after first treatment is completed and they are nit free *if your child is sent home with lice or nits, they will be required to stop by the front desk each morning to be checked before readmittance will be granted.

Impetigo	Until child has been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours.
Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease	Child may return when fever is gone and child is well enough to participate in normal activities (lesions or rash may still be present). Doctor's note required.
Whooping Cough	Child may return 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment begins.
Pin Worms	Child may return after 24 hours of treatment.
RSV	Child may return when child is without fever for 24 hours and is able to participate in normal activities. Doctor's note required.
Ringworm	Child may return after 24 hours treatment has begun.
Scabies	Child may return after 24 hours treatment has begun.
Shingles	If blisters can be covered by clothing or a bandage, no exclusion is needed. If blisters cannot be covered, children should be excluded until blisters have crusted.
Strep Throat	May return 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and until the child is without fever for 24 hours.

If your child becomes ill at home with one of the above communicable diseases please let the center know within 24 hours.

In the Event of Emergency: A staff person will immediately contact the parent as another staff person contacts emergency services. Emergency services will transport the child and a teacher to the nearest emergency facility, where the parent will meet them. If a parent cannot be reached, an emergency contact person listed in the child's file will be called. The teacher accompanying the child will bring the medical authorization form signed by the parent from the child's file.

In the case of mild illness, the child will be made as comfortable as possible. The child's parent will be contacted to pick up the child.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES/ ALTERNATE SHELTER ARRANGEMENTS FOR FIRE, NATURAL DISASTERS, AND BUILDING EMERGENCIES:

Fire drills are practiced monthly and evacuation procedures are posted in every classroom. In case of natural disasters and building emergencies the director will notify the parents and children will be relocated to an alternate shelter.

Written plans and procedures for the following are can be found in our Emergency/Disaster Plan:

- Lost or missing child
- Suspected maltreatment of a child
- Suspected sexual, physical, or emotional maltreatment or abuse of staff, volunteers, or parent guardians that occur at the program
- Medical, dental, and mental health emergencies
- Child or staff deaths
- Unauthorized, contentious, or intoxicated/impaired parents/guardians/family members
- Dangerous intruders

SAFETY

The safety and welfare of all children is of the utmost importance to all CORAL REEF ACADEMY management and staff. From the moment a child arrives, until a child is picked up at the end of the day a child shall never be left alone or unsupervised while in the care of CORAL REEF ACADEMY staff.

All safety policies and procedures will be strictly observed and enforced.

There is immediate phone access in the building at all times. Every out calling phone prominently displays all emergency contact numbers.

Every staff member is trained in emergency procedures in the event of fire or emergency weather alerts. Emergency exit plans are displayed in every room of the center and emergency evacuation drills are held monthly without notice.

Severe Weather: CORAL REEF ACADEMY will follow the procedures of the local public-school district with regards to severe weather. Listen to all announcements or call your school before you come to the school.

In the event of violent/severe weather that occurs during operating hours including, but not limited to, lightning, tornado, hurricane, thunderstorm and hailstorm, or any visible signs of violent weather, all children will be immediately removed from all outside play areas. If the circumstance warrants, all

children will be relocated to an interior room. When relocation is complete, attendance will be taken to ensure all children are present. If violent/severe weather should threaten during a field trip or during any other time of transportation, all children will remain at the current location until boarding the vehicle is safe or until leaving the vehicle to the destination can be done safely. If weather conditions become severe during the day and it is necessary to close the school due to dangerous conditions, parents will be notified to pick-up their child/children. Alternate emergency shelters will be listed within each school's emergency plan. See your director for details.

Please note: As a general rule, Coral Reef Academy will use the Early Learning Coalition and Brevard Public Schools as a bench mark for closures for severe weather or other emergencies. Reopening after a closure is at the discretion of Coral Reef Academy and may or may not align with the reopening schedule of BPS.

First aid kits are located in the director's office and in all school vehicles. All staff members receive training and certification in First Aid, Communicable Diseases and Child Abuse Recognition and at least one employee is on premises during all hours of operation with Pediatric CPR and first aid certification.

Video Surveillance: Our classrooms are monitored 24/7 with video surveillance. Please note that all activities of the center are being recorded. The videos are not accessible via any online means nor are they accessible to parents upon request.

INCIDENTS

Through supervision and safety protocols, we try our best to keep all children safe from accidents, but unfortunately we can't prevent all of them. If your child is hurt while at the center, you will get an accident report filled out by the teacher so that you are aware of the incident. If you have any questions about an incident please let us know, all accidents/ incidents are documented.

Biting can be common in toddler classrooms. While our staff does their best to intervene before biting occurs, it can be unavoidable. Children who develop a habit of biting are sent home for the day when a bite breaks the skin, a bite occurs on the face, or a child bites three times within one day. If a child develops a pattern of biting, they may be placed on a one-bite send home plan at the discretion of the Center Director. This allows both the teachers and family to implement strategies to prevent biting while minimizing injuries and ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment. Excessive biting may be considered grounds for disenrollment.

We prioritize a safe and conducive learning environment for our students. Therefore, we have a zero-tolerance policy for any form of violence within the K-6 School Age program. If any child exhibits outwardly violent behavior towards their peers or teachers, they will be promptly sent home for the day. We kindly request that you arrange for their immediate pickup in such cases. We believe in offering opportunities for growth and improvement. However, it is crucial to maintain a safe and respectful space for everyone. Repeated violations of this policy may lead to more severe

consequences, such as suspension or, in extreme cases, expulsion from the school. Such decisions will be made at the school's discretion.

MEDICAL RECORDS and MEDICATION

Medical Records: As required by law, each child must be examined by a licensed physician prior to enrollment in group child care and a health form, signed by the physician, must be on file at the Center. The health record must be updated on a yearly basis with a new health form included in the child's file each time.

In addition to the health exam, a Florida immunization history must be on file prior to the child's start date. Please review your child's immunization record to verify they are eligible to enter group care and note the expiration date listed by their physician. A new record is required prior to this date.

*There are families who are religiously exempt in our program. These families will be called and asked to pick their child up from our program in cases of infectious disease outbreak.

Medication Administration: Given the regulations under which the center must operate, and the tremendous responsibility involved in the administering of medication to children, these are the Coral Reef Center guidelines:

1. **Medication is only administered at 10 am and at 2 pm during the program day.** If your child has a medical necessity for their medication to be administered at another time, a doctor's note is required that includes the following:
 - The name of the medication
 - The dosage
 - The time it needs to be given
 - The symptoms and/or illness being treated
 - The expiration of the authorization
2. Only prescription medications are to be administered during the program day. The medication must come in the original prescription container with a full, legible, readable prescription label.
3. If an over the counter medication must be administered, it must be accompanied by a doctor's note that includes the following:
 - The name of the medication

- The dosage
- The time it needs to be given
- The symptoms and/or illness being treated
- The expiration of the authorization

*****Note: No fever reducing medication will be administered at the center for any reason unless in the case of an ear infection, shots, or teething; also a Doctor's note must be provided that states the dosage and symptoms being treated. *****

4. In the case of a "maintenance" medication such as a nebulizer, these will only be administered with a doctor's note that includes the following:
 - The name of the medication
 - The dosage
 - The time it needs to be given
 - The symptoms and/or illness being treated
 - The expiration of the authorization
5. In the case of "emergency" medication such as an epi-pen, the center must have an allergy action plan/emergency action plan on file and updated annually, **and two epi-pens**. One epi-pen must remain in a locked cabinet in the classroom and one in the office. In the case that emergency medication is administered, 9-1-1 is called and the parent or guardian is notified immediately.
6. Only the Director administers medication (except for emergency medications such as epi-pens, in which staff may be authorized to administer)
7. Parents must fill out an Authorization for Medication Form for ALL medication.
8. For children who arrive at the center via methods of transportation other than with a parent, the parent must hand the medication and authorization form to the driver, who in turn will give them directly to the teacher. Children are not to handle medication.
9. Diaper Rash Cream: Families of diapered children are asked to provide diaper rash cream to be applied as needed. It must be provided in a squeeze tube; we do not accept tubs. The cream must list in its directions; to be used for diaper rash, must be provided by each child's individual family, and is not shared. We do not keep extra rash cream at the center.

DISCIPLINE

At Coral Reef Academy, our approach to discipline is positive and focused on teaching children while treating them with respect. Our teachers receive training in child-centered, positive discipline techniques, which include:

- **Positive Phrasing:** We guide children by telling them what they *can* do, rather than focusing on what they cannot do.
- **Orientation:** We encourage children to complete tasks by pointing out what needs to be done, rather than giving direct orders.
- **Logical & Natural Consequences:** When a child misuses a toy or resource, it may be temporarily removed to teach responsibility.
- **Reflecting Feelings:** We acknowledge and validate a child's emotions by commenting on how they may be feeling, while still guiding acceptable behavior.

Through these strategies, we honor the original meaning of the word *discipline*, which is "to teach."

Referral Process

If a teacher observes behavior that may not be age-appropriate, the concern is brought to the Center Director. The classroom will be observed, and records reviewed, including documentation of efforts made to support the child. Parents are then invited to a conference to discuss observations and, if needed, a list of referrals for additional evaluation or services is provided.

Written parental permission is required before the Center can contact outside agencies, schools, counselors, or healthcare providers on behalf of the child. Coral Reef Academy will support families in making these referrals. All conferences, observations, referrals, and communications regarding the child's behavior are documented and maintained on file. The Center Director serves as the liaison for all referrals.

Important Note: Our goal is for every child to succeed at Coral Reef Academy. We strive to address behavioral challenges using the strategies above. However, in rare cases where a child's behavior poses a safety risk or is incompatible with the program, the Center reserves the right to dismiss the child to ensure the well-being of all children and staff.

NUTRITION

We offer breakfast to all children between 7:00am and 9:00am. Our breakfast times are individualized by classroom. We ask that parents always drop their child off in their classroom and the teachers will take them to the cafeteria for breakfast. If you arrive after your class has had breakfast (but before 9 am) and wish for your child to eat with us, you must remain in the cafeteria with your child for the meal and then escort them to class. Do not leave your child with another teacher or class in the cafeteria. If you happen to arrive later than 9 am, please make sure your child has had breakfast because we are unable to serve breakfast after 9:00 am.

We offer hot lunches that are freshly prepared here at the center. A variety of nutritious foods are served. Lunch is provided between 10:30 and 12, depending on the age group. Afternoon snacks are also provided. Snack times are between 2:15 and 4:00, also depending on the age group. Please refer to your child's class schedule in the classroom to find out specific times for meals.

In order to encourage children to try a wide variety of foods, **we ask that parents not send in food for the children.** However, in the event of dietary restrictions due to medical or religious reasons, it is sometimes necessary for parents to send in an appropriate substitution for lunch. All exemptions must be noted on the enrollment form. If your child has a medical food allergy which requires emergency medication, additional paperwork will be required (see section on medication administration). A weekly menu is posted in each classroom. Please check the menu and plan to send in a substitute for that part of the meal which the child cannot eat while allowing him/her to be served the remaining items of the meal. Please let a classroom teacher know that an alternate meal item has been sent. On special occasions such as birthdays, parents may arrange with teachers to bring special snacks if they wish. We encourage healthy food choices such as fruit, mini muffins etc. and they must be store bought.

CORAL REEF ACADEMY participates in the Child Care Food Program and all families are required to complete paperwork for the program, yearly regardless of income.

CORAL REEF ACADEMY is a tree-nut and seed free school.

INFANT FEEDING

Proper nutrition is very important to an infant's growth and development. Close attention to the general and individual nutrition needs of the children in our care is our goal. For infants who use the center-provided formula as part of the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the following formula preparation procedure is used:

Formula Preparation:

- Caregiver's hands will be washed before feeding children. Children's hands will be washed before and after being fed.
- Formula will be used within 1 hour after feeding begins.
- Prepared formula must be labeled with the child's name and date and kept covered and refrigerated. Individual bottles must be labeled with the child's name and date and capped for storage in the refrigerator until use.
- Preparation surface will be cleaned, rinsed, and sanitized before preparing formula or food
- If formula is warmed, the bottle will be placed in hot water (not boiling) for five minutes

and temperature tested before giving to infant. Microwave ovens will not be used to heat formula, breast milk, or baby food.

- Other acceptable methods of heating infant bottles include: bottle warmers or by holding the bottle under warm running tap water until the fluid is no longer cold. Bottles will be wiped off to prevent hot water from dripping on child.
- Any formula remaining in a bottle or food remaining in a serving container after a feeding shall be discarded. (Bacteria from baby's mouth are introduced into milk and begin to multiply once bottles are taken from the refrigerator and warmed).
- If the feeding has taken over 1 hour to complete or the bottle has been unrefrigerated for 1 hour, the milk shall be discarded.

Breast Milk Preparation:

- Human milk from a mother will be only used with that mother's child.
- Expressed breast milk may be brought from home in a "ready to feed" bottle, or in a frozen bag which contains the exact amount to be warmed and used in one feeding. One bottle must be provided for each frozen milk feeding. Milk should be transported in an insulated container that keeps the milk at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Breast milk will be refrigerated or frozen as soon as it arrives at the child care program. Any unused breast milk must be sent home each day and may not stay stored at the center.
- Child's full name and date must be on every bottle.
- Caregiver's hands will be washed before feeding bottles.
- If heated, all breast milk will be placed in hot water (not boiling) for five minutes and temperature tested before giving to infant. Microwaves will not be used to warm bottles.
- Any contents remaining in a bottle after feeding will be discarded. If the feeding has taken over 1 hour to complete or the bottle has been unrefrigerated for 1 hour, the milk shall be discarded.

Feeding:

- Infants will be held or fed sitting up. Bottle propping, feeding in cribs, car seats, or swings is not permitted. Children who are able to hold their own bottles will do so seated in a bouncy seat or a chair.
- Infants will be fed "on demand" as much as possible, but at least every 3 hours and usually not more than hourly.

- Formula or breast milk will be the only milk product served to children younger than 12 months of age unless medically indicated by the child's health care provider.
- **No medication or cereal can be added to the bottle unless medically indicated by the child's health care provider and with a doctor's note on file. No cereal can be added to the bottle unless medically indicated with a doctor's note on file.**

Cow's milk:

- Only whole pasteurized milk will be served to children younger than 24 months unless medically indicated by the child's health care provider.

Solid food:

- Children will not be allowed to walk around with food, bottles, or cups.
- Caregiver will communicate with children during mealtime.
- When high chairs are used, caregivers will use safety straps.
- Trays, seats, arms of highchair will be cleaned and sanitized before and after eating.
- Commercially packaged baby food will be served from a bowl or cup and not directly from the container unless the entire container will be used for only one feeding.
- Introduction of solid foods will begin between 4-6 months as indicated by the child's nutritional and developmental needs after consulting family unless medically indicated by the child's health care provider.
- After six months children will be encouraged to self-feed depending on their skills in this area.
- Food will be cut into ¼ inch pieces for finger feeding by children. Utensils will be offered to children who can use them.
- Round, firm foods that might be a choking hazard such as but not limited to: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, nuts, seeds, raw peas, dried fruit, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter, and hard candy will not be served to children under the age of 3 years old.
- Food will never be used as a reward or denied as punishment.
- Family/Caregiver daily reports will be filled out daily and shared with families of infants and toddlers.
- Staff will receive a written copy of this policy in their orientation packets before beginning work

at the center.

- Written instructions are posted in food preparation areas.
- Parents are given information when beginning our program and information is exchanged daily between caregiver and parent.

SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES

Infants, less than one year old, will always be placed on their backs to sleep. When, in the opinion of the infant's licensed health care provider, an infant requires alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements, the provider must have on file at the facility written instructions, signed by the infant's licensed health care provider, detailing the alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements. Caregivers will put the infant to sleep as specified in the written instructions. When infants can easily turn from their stomachs to their backs and from their backs to their stomachs, they shall be initially placed on their backs, but shall be allowed to adopt whatever positions they prefer for sleep. Infants in our program will sleep on a firm, flat sleep surface, in a safety-approved crib covered by a fitted sheet. Infants will not have pillows, blankets, crib bumpers, or boppies in their crib. Soft objects, toys and swaddling in the crib is prohibited as well as necklaces, bibs, strings or attachments to pacifiers. We follow this recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

CENTER CLEANING

- All toys are washed and disinfected as needed.
- Toilets and sinks are cleaned and disinfected daily and more if needed.
- Tables are disinfected before and after every meal
- Blankets are sent home for washing every Friday
- Cots are disinfected each day
- Floors are swept, mopped and vacuumed daily
- Carpets/rugs are professionally cleaned every 6 weeks

HAND WASHING

We strongly believe that high-quality hand washing is important to maintaining good health for the children and the staff.

Before all meals and snacks

After toileting
After sneezing, coughing or wiping a runny nose.
After playing outside
After playing in a water table, sand box or play dough

DIAPER CHANGING AND TOILET TRAINING METHODS/ CLOTH DIAPERS

- All children wearing a diaper will be changed every two hours and checked continuously throughout the day.
- Daily reports will be filled out and sent home at the end of the day.
- **Cloth Diapers**
 - When children require cloth diapers, only those brought from the child's home may be used, and must be returned to the parent at the end of the day. Cloth diapers must have an absorbent liner as well as an outer cover that is waterproof. Soiled cloth diapers shall be placed in a securely covered container which is not accessible to children. The container shall be emptied and sanitized daily and soiled cloth diapers sent home daily in a large labeled plastic bag provided by the family.
- Toilet training methods should be a positive experience for everyone involved. It should only take a short period of time and when your child is truly ready. Problems arise when adults do not pay attention to the child's lack of readiness. There is no right or wrong age to toilet train a child. It is as individual as learning to walk. No two children will toilet train in exactly the same time frame or even in the same manner. We do require children to be toilet trained before entering our 3 year old classroom, however.
- Unauthorized persons are prohibited from observing in or entering the toileting areas of the classroom.

NAP TIME

Every child is provided with an individual mat, cot, blanket and sheet, or assigned crib during the daily rest time. Rest time is required by our state-licensing agreement, therefore we cannot accommodate requests for your child to be exempt from rest time. Children are not required to sleep, however they are encouraged to rest on their mats quietly, look at a book, listen to story tapes, or they can sleep. Please make sure your child has a blanket and sheet for rest time and that you take it home to wash at the end of each week.

All infants are placed on their backs to sleep in cribs. No items are permitted in cribs (blankets, pillows, stuffed animals, etc).

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All child care workers are mandated by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to local authorities. This includes but is not limited to signs of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect.

WITHDRAWAL/TERMINATION/CENTER DEPARTURE

The Director of the program may make the decision to terminate a child from the program if a problematic situation continues to occur and every effort has been made to correct the behavior. The Director also reserves the right to suspend or reduce the schedule of a child. The following examples are reasons a child or family may be suspended or terminated, but does not constitute a complete list:

- Nonpayment of tuition and/or violation of the payment plan contract
- Behavior of a child that threatens the safety of other children or staff and that has not been successfully corrected with reasonable behavior strategies*
- Excessive after closing pickups
- Non-attendance
- Incomplete paperwork or missed deadlines for paperwork
- Noncompliance with Health Care Policies
- Incomplete Immunization and/or health care records
- Interference with Coral Reef Academy's ability to conduct business (including misconduct or threatening behavior on behalf of a parent/guardian)
- Inability of the program to meet the child's needs

• We are committed to creating a positive and nurturing environment for all children in our care. However, we understand that each child is unique, and sometimes the fit between a child and our childcare center may not be optimal. In order to ensure the well-being and harmony of our childcare community, we have established the following policy regarding disenrollment within the first two weeks of a child's attendance:

- Observation Period: During the first two weeks of a child's enrollment at Coral Reef Academy we will closely observe their interactions with peers, staff, and the overall adjustment to the childcare environment.
- Communication: If any concerns or challenges arise during this observation period, our staff will communicate openly and honestly with the parents or guardians. This may include discussions about the child's behavior, social integration, or any other relevant factors affecting their experience at our childcare center.
- Disenrollment Process: In some cases, it may become apparent that Coral Reef Academy is not the best fit for the child, and the child may not be adapting well to the center's routines and activities. In such situations, the Center Director may make the decision to disenroll the child. If this decision is made by the Center Director within the first two weeks of attendance, Coral Reef Academy will refund the registration fee in full and termination will

be effective immediately. The disenrollment process will be conducted in a respectful and supportive manner to ensure a smooth transition for both the child and their family.

After the initial two-week observation period, if any child is terminated from the program, whenever possible, a two-week notice of termination is given. Sometimes circumstances necessitate an immediate termination.

If the issue is behavior, the center will work with the parent to resolve the issue before terminating the enrollment. To the best of our ability, a parent conference will be arranged to establish a plan for the child. This plan could include behavior strategies, scheduling changes, or the initiation of intervention services. If improvement is not shown, once the plan is in effect, dismissal from the program may be necessary to insure the safety of the children and staff.

If you choose to terminate your child's enrollment from our program we ask that you give us a 2-week notice of disenrollment. ***Please note, children who are disenrolled in one location may not enroll in another Coral Reef Academy location.**

PUBLICITY AND PHOTOGRAPHY

From time to time, children enrolled at Coral Reef Academy may be invited to participate in activities related to school communications and classroom use. This may include photographs for our website, social media, newsletters, local publications, or for internal classroom and educational purposes.

At the time of enrollment, parents/guardians will be asked to complete a consent form indicating whether they grant or deny permission for Coral Reef Academy to photograph their child. We respect each family's preferences and will honor the permissions provided.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Staff are highly qualified and trained in the area of early childhood development. Staff are screened both through FBI and FDLE, and do not begin their employment until we receive clearance from these agencies. All staff are required to obtain their 40 hours of Introductory Child Care training through DCF.

If you would like to volunteer your time at Coral Reef it may not exceed 5 hours per month unless you are fingerprinted.

SHOW AND TELL

Please check with your child's class for show and tell Circle/Morning Time, the teachers plan a Sharing Time. This is a time where each child can show a special toy, book, "treasure" etc and tell their classmates about it. Our objectives for this time are:

1. To help your child feel more comfortable participating in a small group. (speaking, waiting for a turn, etc.).
2. To help your child develop descriptive language skills.
3. To give your child an opportunity to practice sharing his/her special item with others and to have a turn playing with another child's sharing toy.

Some suggestions for appropriate items for Show and Tell: a special toy, a special book, and a postcard your child may have received. Occasionally your child's class may have a special theme for Show and Tell. Your child's teacher will send home a note or the monthly newsletter will indicate the specifics.

It is helpful to have the child's name on the toy or book, if possible. Please, only one small item per child.

Items that are not suitable for Sharing Day are: guns, weapons and action figures that encourage aggressive play, toys that have tiny parts that can easily get lost, play make-up that might be shared on children's mouths (health precaution).

LIVING ENTITIES

Most of the classrooms at Coral Reef have a classroom pet or plant. Children benefit greatly from having a living entity in their classroom. It encourages a child's physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. If your child has any allergies to pets or plants please let the front office know.

Social Media and Online Communication

Coral Reef Academy values open, honest, and respectful communication. We encourage parents and guardians to bring any questions or concerns directly to the Center Director or management team so they can be addressed promptly and professionally.

Parents and guardians are expected to use good judgment and communicate respectfully when posting or commenting on social media, online review sites, community forums, or any other electronic platform. Posts or messages that are false, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, or that intentionally damage the reputation of the school, its staff, enrolled children, or families are not permitted. Parents are also expected to respect the privacy and confidentiality of children, families, and staff by not sharing confidential information, photos, or videos without permission.

If concerns arise regarding a parent's online conduct, Coral Reef Academy may review the situation and discuss the matter with the family. Depending on the nature and severity of the conduct, the school may issue a verbal or written warning, limit communication methods, or, in cases involving repeated violations, harassment, threats, defamation, or behavior that disrupts the safe and positive operation of the school, terminate the child's enrollment.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with families to maintain a respectful, supportive, and positive school community both in person and online.

CONTACTS/RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

In the event that you have any questions or concerns beyond those answered in the handbook, your Center Director is your first contact. The Director's office is located at the main entrance of our buildings, at the front desk. You can also refer to your Center Assistant Director if you have questions or if the Center Director is not available. The Assistant Director is also located at the front desk.

Should your questions not be satisfactorily answered by your Center management, the Executive Director is available as well. The Executive Director oversees the operations at both locations and has an office at both of our schools.

The Executive Director for both our Stack and Nasa location is Tara Ball and she can be reached at taraball@mycoralreefacademy.com or via the center phone number at 321-728-8895 or 321-837-3330.

Parent Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of and read the FAMILY HANDBOOK. I understand the contents and agree to abide by the policies set forth in the handbook. I also acknowledge that Coral Reef Academy has the right to amend this handbook at any time.

Printed Name

Signature

Date Signed
