**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**PRESCHOOL TUITION CHARGES:**

**License #C09OR0601**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to take advantage of the teachable moments that happen every day. Our goal is to foster the intellectual, creative, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical growth and development of our students and to inspire a lifelong commitment to learning, caring for one another and realizing the rewards of good morals. A loving school environment promotes cultural values and supports positive relationships between student, peers and staff in respectful interactions. Children learn by doing – moving from concrete, hands-on experiences to more abstract concept development that utilize their past experiences to create new ones.

Our priority is to provide a healthy balance of child-directed and teacher-guided activities and conversation, as well as time for children to work individually, in small groups and in large groups. We believe that a stable, safe, healthy, comfortable, and culturally relevant environment is crucial to a child’s growth. A play-based approach, rich in literacy and vocabulary building activities provides a classroom where children are encouraged to construct their own knowledge. We believe that our program reflects the needs and goals of children and families. We look forward to working closely with families which provide the support we need to collectively guide and raise our children.

**Our Philosophy**

We use a combination of philosophies regarding the development of children, including those of Lee Vygostky, a socialist who believed that children are a product of their environment which includes the adults in their lives. He believed that adults can help children build knowledge by "scaffolding" or helping them to the next level (*Theory of* *Cognition 1978).* We believe in the developmental stages of children as taught by Erik Erikson *(1959).* He believed that the adults in a child's life greatly influenced the child as they passed through various developmental stages. We also believe that children need a relationship with God and we strive to show them unconditional love.

As a center, we take advantage of every teachable moment and turn them into concrete memories by involving their sensory systems; body, mind and spirit.

Age appropriate activities and centers stocked with toys to encourage your child to learn while playing. Colorful blocks, puzzles, props, stringing beads, counting bears and art supplies are used to build the skills and confidence your child needs to succeed. Television may be used for the last 30 minutes of the day or occasionally during the day for educational purposes only.

When your child is old enough to move from one class to the next, they will be slowly transitioned by allowing them to spend time with their new teacher and friends for a few days. Parents will be verbally notified. Older children turning four will normally move up at the beginning of the new school year in late August or early September.

In the event the director, or teacher becomes concerned that a child may be demonstrating delays in any of the developmental domains; language/literacy, math/cognitive, social/emotional or self-expression/acceptance, a conference will be held between staff and parents. If further evaluation is needed, the center will contact our Early Intervention Specialist and work closely with the parents to create a plan (I.E.P) to help that child reach their developmental milestones.

Recent studies show that children that have a vocabulary of 1,500 words or more learn to read and write sooner and have a better school experience. Kindergarten students are expected understand 6,000-8,000 words in order to perform well in the classroom. We are dedicated to helping our students acquire those skills that will help them to be successful students for the rest of their school careers. *(ELCOC. org)*

The Conrad Academy Preschool does not discriminate against children or adults, parent or staff member on the basis of sex, age, religion, national origin, color, race, marital status, physical or mental disabilities or veteran status.

We do not discriminate against children of varying abilities and will make accommodations for them to the best of our abilities and educational background*. (A.D.A. 1990)*

This center reports suspected child abuse in accordance with the Department of Children and Families *(s. 39.201, F.S.)*

Thank you for choosing THE CONRAD ACADEMY & PRESCHOOL. The following information has been provided for you to answer any questions you may have about the center.

Criteria for Students with Special Needs:

Students with special needs are accepted on a case-to-case basis. For children four years of age, a Gardiner Scholarship must be in place before enrolling your child. Parents may be required to pay the regular fee for children with special needs (please see rates) until the scholarship is available. Once the child has been observed, a determination will be made for a permanent placement of the child for the duration of the school year. Children that have turned four years old on or before September 1st of the school year, may remain with a VPK class. If it is determined that the student would benefit by being with a smaller group in the care of a teacher with specific credentials, the child will be moved to an ESE classroom. Plans for the child will be discussed with the parents before any changes are initiated.

**Tuition Policy**

1) All tuition fees are due and payable on Monday, or on your child’s first program day. A $15.00 late fee will be charged after this day. If fees are unpaid three days after the due date, your child will not be admitted until full payment is made.

2) A full week’s payment is due if you child attends 3 or more days.

3) After 1 year of full-time enrollment your child is entitled to (1 week) vacation; no payment required.

4) In the event of illness /emergency in which a child does not attend for the entire week, 1/2 of the weekly tuition is due, but the event must be verifiable, and the discount authorized by office staff. Fees may be waived at the discretion of the school superintendent. For absence of more than two days for illness, a doctor’s note is required to return to school.

5) In the event that the school is open, but you do not send your child, 50% of your regular weekly fee will be due, parent fees are due for families with 4C Readiness contract when the school is open whether the child attends or not.

6) Discounted fees are limited to twice in one year.

7) If a child is withdrawn, and returns within the year, a registration fee may be charged again.

8) Returned check fee $35.00

9) Parents are required to register through factsmgt.com, district code: CON-FL, for the purpose of viewing your child’s account, to access your payment history and to communicate electronically to and from the school and your child’s teacher. You will be billed electronically. When submitting payment, using your banking information rather than a credit card will save you a service charge, however, you may still pay with cash or card at the front office. Speak with office personnel for assistance.

**Registration Fees**

All Students are required to pay a registration fee upon enrollment. This registration fee is nonrefundable and is due every August. The current registration fees will be discussed at the time of your tour and is due by no later than the week your child begins attending. Tuition is due prior to the school week by Monday afternoon. Factsmgt.com charges a late fee for accounts that have a balance. Please keep in mind that you are required to give a two week notice if you plan to withdraw your child from the center.

**Holidays and Vacations:** The Conrad Academy Preschool is closed on New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Good Friday, July 4th or the alternative, Labor Day, Martin Luther King's, Birthday, President’s Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after. There is no reduction in tuition for these holidays. In the years that the school is closed for Christmas, parents will be notified in advance and there is NO CHARGE to the parents.

*The Conrad Academy & Preschool is closed the same days as Orange County Public Schools for severe weather/hurricane. There is no reduction in tuition for these days unless authorized by the school superintendent.*

**Hours**: We open at 7:00 A.M. and close at 5:45 P.M. Monday through Friday, with the exception of posted holidays.

**Late Pick Up Policy**

A late fee of $1.00 per minute will be charged after 5:45 P.M. until your arrival. It is imperative that you notify the center if an emergency will cause you to be late. Late fee will be assessed and are due when you arrive. If you have not contacted the school by 5:45 PM, the following chain of events may occur:

1) The school will attempt to contact the emergency numbers in your child’s file

2) If there is no response, the school will contact Florida Highway Patrol to find out if you have been involved in an auto accident.

3) If there is no record, Florida Highway Patrol may contact the Sheriff’s Department to dispatch a squad car to your home to check on your safety

4) Either you or the deputy will contact the school with your E. T. A.

5) Parent will be responsible for all charges incurred

**Sign In Policy**

Upon arrival to school in the morning, parents must hand their child to a teacher at the door, you must wait with your child. You are required to sign your child in and out every day. VPK parents must sign a monthly attendance form.

**FULL TIME CHILD CARE = NO MORE THAN 10 HOURS PER DAY**

**PART TIME CHILD CARE = NO MORE THAN 5 HOURS PER DAY**

In the event a full-time student goes beyond the 10-hour daily limit, parents will be charged an additional $15 per day, or no more than $40 per week.

In the event a part-time student goes beyond the 5-hour daily limit, parents will be charged the full-time rate, up to 10 hours per day. Additional fees may apply if the child is left beyond the 10-hour daily limit, not to exceed $40 per week.

**Parents must sign their child in upon drop off and sign them out when leaving.** You must sign using this format: Time, first initial and last name:

{IN: 8.05 T. Parent OUT: 5:00 T. Parent}

Signing in and out is for you and your child's protection. It is proof that you brought your child to school that day. Please be aware that we do not accept children during the hours of 12:00-2:00 P.M. unless prior arrangements have been made by the parent in the form a phone call or note with an explanation of the tardy.

**Dismissal Policy**

**We have very strict guidelines in this area. Children are allowed to leave the center with the parent or guardian who enrolled him or her only**. A written and signed note by the parent/legal guardian is required for any other person to pick up your child. This includes adults listed on the enrollment form. You will be required to show identification. No child will be released to another child or person under 18, even a sibling, or to a person that appears intoxicated.

**Our center has an “OPEN DOOR” policy**; please refrain from visits during naptime between the hours of 12:00 to 2:00 P.M. Drop in visitation is limited to the enrolling parent or guardian; all others must have permission from that parent and be cleared by office personnel. This will be strictly enforced and is for the protection of all our students.

Please feel free to communicate your concerns, comments and questions with staff in verbal, written, and e-mail form though the factsmgt.com system. Your involvement is greatly desired to improve the care your child receives.

**Because The Conrad Academy & Preschool is responsible for your child**, ethics in education prohibits us from releasing a child to a parent that is visibly impaired due to alcohol or other substances, including illness that may interfere with their ability to drive. Be aware that law enforcement may be contacted.

**Illness and Medication Policy**

**Only medicine with prescription labels containing your child’s name, doctor’s name, the date and dose will be allowed at school.** Parent must leave medicine at the front office and sign medication authorization form. Over the counter drugs are strictly prohibited. Your cooperation is required when your child becomes sick during the day. We will remove your child from the classroom and notify you to pick him or her up. Please be diligent.

Children who have the following symptoms will be sent home:

* Green or yellow discharge from the nose.
* Suspicious rash.
* Fever over 99˚ degrees.
* Pink eye.
* “Croupy” cough.
* Ringworm.
* “5th disease (also called “slap cheek” syndrome).
* Head lice (NO NIT POLICY, child may not return unless all eggs removed).
* Diarrhea.
* Flu-like symptoms (possible H1N1 or Swine Flu)
* Vomiting

If you do not comply by picking up your child immediately, we reserve the right to refuse to provide care to your child until a doctor’s note is provided.

**Allergy Policy**

It is the responsibility of parents to inform the center of your child’s allergies to food, insects or other environmental factors. Parents must provide an Epi-pen for students with anaphylaxis and must maintain the pen current. Each allergy case is different, so parents must provide as much information regarding their child’s particular allergy as possible. Parents must demonstrate the use of any equipment or emergency medical treatment that is necessary with office staff and teachers. A copy of the allergy policy of The Conrad Academy is available upon request.

**Meal Policy**

**A monthly lunch menu is posted the lobby. No chewing gum is allowed during school hours. Hard candy is prohibited.**

***USDA Program guidelines:***

*Breakfast, lunch (hot or cold balanced meal) and an afternoon snack are served during the school day. In compliance with U.S.D.A. Food Program, meals are regulated for sugar and salt content as well as nutritional value****; snacks and food from outside the center are prohibited****.*  Breakfast is served from 7:30-9:00 AM, Lunch is served from 10:30-12:00, P.M. Snack is served from 2:00-3:30. Special accommodations are available for children with specific allergies and are handled on a case-to-case basis. Substitutions must be authorized by the USDA Food program and fall within the parameters of the food guide before administering any changes to the menu.

**Dress Code**

**Clothing: All** Preschool are required to wear school uniforms. Navy blue polo style shirts with khaki-colored bottoms, including shorts, skort/skirts, and pants. Girls may wear jumpers or solid navy style polo dresses. All students in the Pre-kindergarten program must purchase polo shirts with the school’s logo. Call for availability. Tennis shoes or closed-toed shoes are required because our playground is covered with mulch and may cause injury to exposed skin. Jewelry is not allowed; it poses a choking hazard for all ages. We will not be responsible for the loss of gold or precious jewelry. Pants or shorts with an elastic waist are recommended for those children who are potty-training. Belts are permittedonly if your child is able to remove it withouthelp. All children should bring extra clothing, in case of eating, bathroom or painting accidents.

**Electronics and toys:** *The Conrad Academy Preschool is not responsible for lost or broken toys,* electronic equipment such as gaming devices, phones, etc. They are allowed for the older students on "Game Day" during the summer, but must be brought **at your own risk** otherwise, do not send toys or phones to school with students**. NO rubber/latex balloons please!**

**Discipline Policy**

An important part of our teaching task is helping children develop inner discipline. This means we must provide reasonable rules, logical consequences for breaking those rules, and being able to give more responsibility to the children as they are able to assume it.

We use positive techniques for guidance, including redirection, anticipation and elimination of potential problems, positive reinforcement, and encouragement. We also use age-appropriate discussion to guide children into making more acceptable choices.

Our Policy strictly prohibits children from being subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited by all childcare personnel. Parental involvement is required. Consistent, clear rules and daily routines are established and followed by all. In the event we have a child whose behavior is not acceptable, a conference with parents will be necessary to determine how together we can solve the problem.

When necessary, children may be suspended or expelled for behavior that causes danger to themselves or other students, (striking, kicking, or spitting) at students or staff, just to name a few. There is no reduction in tuition for these instances.

It is never appropriate for a parent to confront another classmate who is accused of unacceptable behavior toward their child. It is the responsibility of this staff to resolve conflicts between students and to schedule conferences involving parents when needed.

**Expulsion Policy**

**Children may be suspended or expelled for behavior that causes danger to themselves or other students or staff (striking, kicking, spitting, throwing things, creating chaos etc.). There is no reduction in tuition for suspension resulting from these instances. Any parent acting in the above manner shall be removed by police and their child(ren) expelled.**

**Special Information**: False fire alarms are a misdemeanor in the state of Florida. Please be aware that if your child activates the fire alarm system, you will be held responsible for payment to the Orange County Fire Department for the dispatch of their emergency vehicles. The current charge is $400.00. Your child may be suspended or expelled for activating a fire alarm.

**Suspension Policy**

Dept. of Children and Families requires all parents to obtain forms DH680 (blue) Immunization and DH3040 (yellow) Health Certificate within 30 days of enrollment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep these forms up to date. You must provide an exemption form for children that do not participate in immunizations. Children with outdated forms may be suspended until updated records are returned to the center. There is no reduction in tuition should this occur and a minimum of 50% of your weekly tuition may be charged until the forms are returned.

Parents/students may be suspended for non-payment. Parents with subsidized childcare (4C) can be reported for non-payment and may lose their certification. Accounts will continue to bill 50% of the tuition or the full week, which ever apply, while the child is suspended. Parent Fees may not be waved for any reason.

Children/parents may be suspended for not adhering to the policies of this center outlined this document. Accounts will be billed 50% of the tuition or the full week, which ever apply.

**Biting Policy**

For the protection of our children and staff, our center has adopted the following biting policy:

Infant to four years old: All bites will be dealt with according to the degree of injury. Those that break the skin will be handled more firmly.

* 1st Offense – A Written disciplinary action.
* 2nd Offense – Call parents for conference.
* 3rd Offense – call parents for child removal; possible suspension or expulsion.

Five and over: On occasion, an older child will bite another student or teacher. In this case, the parent will be notified immediately for a phone conference and depending on the degree of injury, may be removed. Suspension or expulsion may be recommended.

Whether your child has been bitten or has been biting, we will work quickly to keep parents informed on the situation. Children’s names must be kept confidential to avoid animosity between involved families and to allow students to feel safe and be as comfortable as possible.

**Parent/Family Volunteers**

Parent/family volunteers must fill out the volunteer form (available in the office) and may not volunteer for more than 8 hours per month. They must be always accompanied by a staff member.

**ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT (VPK and NON-VPK)**

**VPK and 4C Readiness** are state funded programs that have mandatory attendance requirements. The Conrad Academy Preschool must be notified of all children's absences. Any absence of two or more days requires a doctor's note to return to school. Excused absence is limited to three for all students in VPK or those receiving subsidized care (**4C/Readiness**). Parents are required to notify office staff of upcoming vacations in advance in writing unless emergency related**.**

**VPK** students that have been expelled may seek to return by visiting the 4C office located at 3500 W. Colonial Drive, Orlando, 32808 and gaining permission from the VPK specialist. The Conrad Academy Preschool reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment of a VPK student that was expelled for prior non-compliance of the above or any rules outlined in this handbook.

**Attendance rules apply to all students, even those not involved with VPK, 4C or any other program. No reduction of tuition applies unless authorized by management or falls within the guidelines of reduced fees (refer to page 3 of the parent handbook.)**

Students that are part of the Rilya Wilson Act, §39.604, must notify The Conrad Academy Preschool of ALL absences or be held in non-compliance with the Family Safety Program of the Department of Children and Families. Non-Compliance will be reported immediately to the authorities.

**ALL PARENTS** are required to notify the school of their child’s absence within one hour of school starting or by 9:00 AM, to avoid a $5.00 fee. The Department of Children and Families requires an excuse for all absences and tardiness.

**Parents must sign a form upon enrollment indicating receipt of this email, to document compliance with our policies and to give staff permission to view your child files and information.**

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