



# Family Handbook

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# Contact Information

Katie Naylor, Owner/Director

Address: 2342 Silver Street, Ashland Ne, 68003

Phone: 531-240-4469

Email: Kidsarkchristianchildcare@gmail.com

Feel free to email management at any time during business hours or weekdays until 7pm. You may also use Procare to communicate to all teachers. We will respond as soon as we can, if it is during business hours, we will typically respond during rest time, as we are generally busy being involved with the students. If it is an emergency, please do not hesitate to call the center.

## Mission Statement

At Kids' Ark we believe "Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a real blessing," Psalms 127 3:5. Because of this we will provide kind and nurturing care. We will give each child the love and respect they deserve, in a structured, safe and nurturing environment.

We also value a Christian and Montessori education, "Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives," Proverbs 22:6. Because of this, we offer an inclusive curriculum to all ages that supports kindergarten readiness and play-based learning all while supporting a relationship with God and fostering important life skills such as leadership and independence.

Children at Kids' Ark will be in a safe and loving environment, learning academic and life lessons through the word of God.

# Non-Discrimination policy

Here at Kids' Ark all children and families will be treated with the respect they deserve regardless, of race, gender or religion. Discrimination against any of the children or families here at Kids' Ark will not be tolerated.

# Child abuse/Neglect

We are required by law to report any possible child abuse or neglect. With this your child could be interviewed without your consent, in the event something suspicious were to take place.

# Confidentiality policy

Here at Kids' Ark any information about any family enrolled in the center will be held with strict confidence.

# Photography policy

Photography will only be used to record and share the fun and exciting moments we have with the children. If parents wish to not have photos taken of their children, they may sign the permission slip as so. We will share the day with parents/guardians through Procure and occasionally on our professional business Facebook page only if permission has been given.

# Hours of Operations

We are open Monday-Friday 6:30am-5:30pm.

Our calendar year is August to July. Enrollment contracts and rates will be reevaluated each July and any time deemed fit.

## Daily arrival and Dismissal

Please be mindful of our hours of operation and our daily schedule. Please be aware that breakfast ends at 8am. We encourage all students to be dropped off by 8:30am as we begin our daily lessons at 8:30am. Late pick up will result in a fee of \$10 for the first ten minutes and \$1 dollar per minute after that, this fee will be expected in cash upon pick up. If you are continuously late for pickup it will result in a meeting to discuss this policy and the potential of a strike on your enrollment. If someone else is picking up your child you will need to call and notify us ahead of time. That person will need to show ID as well as be on the approved pick-up list on Procure, for the safety of students and staff.

## Sign in/Sign out

Each day upon arrival parents are expected to sign in via contactless sign in through Procure. The app will ask you a few questions upon signing in, most of these are safety questions, please take your time and answer them correctly. Parents are also expected to sign out at pick up time.

## Curriculum

We offer an inclusive curriculum to all ages that supports kindergarten readiness and play-based learning all while supporting a relationship with God and fostering important life skills such as leadership and independence.

## Meals

Kids' Ark will provide breakfast and an afternoon snack each day. We ask that parents provide a lunch for their children each day. Lunches should contain one item from each food group (dairy, protein, fruit, vegetable and grain) and are allowed one special treat. Lunches must be packed in a lunch box with the ability to keep contents cold until lunch and must have an icepack. We understand how hard it can be to send milk in a cold lunch; we will have the option to offer milk at lunch.

If a child has allergies, it should be in their record and on Procare. If the allergy is something like milk parents will be responsible for providing a substitute. If it is something like peanut butter, we will not serve it in the center. When providing a substitute, the proper form must be filled out each time.

## Rest time

Rest time will be from 12:30pm to 2:30pm each day.

All infants will sleep in their cribs, practicing safe sleep policies. Infants are not to have anything in their cribs other than a clean/dry pacifier, however swaddles and sleep sacks can be used. Infants will always be placed in their cribs on their backs.

All older children will be expected to stay on their rest mat but are not forced to sleep. Independent busy activities will be provided 15 minutes after rest time has begun for the older students who choose to not sleep.

## Outside time

Please be aware that we try to go outside every day that weather permits, rain or shine, so please have your children dressed for the season. As weather can be unpredictable, it might be a good idea to leave an extra jacket in your child's cubby. We do not discourage messy play, especially outdoors, extra clothes and shoes are highly

encouraged. If weather does not permit us to go outdoors then we will do a backup gross motor activity indoors. Parents/Guardians are required to provide bug spray and sunscreen for the warmer months, and must sign a new permission slip each season!

## Field Trips

All field trips will be announced through Procare's calendar. Parents/Guardians must sign a new permission slip for each trip. If any time a child is displaying unsafe behavior, we reserve the right to send them home from the field trip. If a child has persistent unsafe behavior during outings a parent/guardian will be required to attend as a one on one, if a parent/guardian is unavailable to attend the field trip, care will not be provided during the duration of the field trip.

# Daily Schedule

Our schedules are not set in stone and can be changed at any time to best fit the needs of all students. All outside play is weather permitted.

## Rainbow Room Daily Schedule

- 6:30am-8:00am» Arrival at School/Breakfast & Table Time
- 8:00am-8:30am» Music and Movement
- 8:30am-8:50am» Circle Time
- 8:50am-9:30am» Daily Activity
- 9:30am-10:30am» Independent Center Exploration & Small Group
- 10:30am-11:30am» Morning Outside Time
- 11:30am-12:00 pm» Lunch Time
- 12:00pm-12:30pm» Rest Time Prep: diapers/potty, yoga, stories, prayer
- 12:30pm-2:30pm» Rest Time
- 2:30pm-3:00pm» Snack Time
- 3:00pm-3:30 pm» Table Work
- 3:30pm-4:30pm» Afternoon Outside Time
- 4:30pm-5:00pm» Afternoon Group Time
- 5:00pm-5:30pm» Independent Fine Motor Exploration
- 5:30pm» Dismissal

## Cloud Room Daily Schedule

- 6:30am-8:00am» Arrival at School/Breakfast & Table Time
- 8:00am-8:30am» Music and Movement
- 8:30am-8:50am» Circle Time
- 8:50am-9:30am» Daily Activity
- 9:30am-10:30am» Independent Center Exploration & Small Group
- 10:30am-11:30am» Morning Outside Time
- 11:30am-12:00 pm» Lunch Time
- 12:00pm-12:30pm» Rest Time Prep: diapers/potty, yoga, stories, prayer
- 12:30pm-2:30pm» Rest Time
- 2:30pm-3:00pm» Snack Time
- 3:00pm-3:30 pm» Table Work
- 3:30pm-4:30pm» Afternoon Outside Time
- 4:30pm-5:00pm» Afternoon Group Time
- 5:00pm-5:30pm» Independent Fine Motor Exploration
- 5:30pm» Dismissal

# Parent board and Mailboxes

The parent board is a resource for families to see upcoming events, the current months calendar and much more! Mailboxes are where you will find all of your student's art work that is not in their portfolios. Please return any forms that need to be filled out and/or signed to Mrs. Katie's Mailbox.

## Supplies

Families will be responsible for providing diapers/velcro pull ups for children that use them. We ask that each family bring one pack of non-scented baby wipes the first day of care each month. We do this baby wipes share program for many reasons, wipes are used for so much more than just diapering and we have found that we save on wipes when only one pack is open at a time, if we run out of wipes before the month is over the center will cover until the next month. Families will also be responsible for making sure their child has extra clothes in their cubby; please be sure these are sealed in their gallon Ziplock bag provided by Kids' Ark.

Each student will need a 3" inch binder with a clear plastic cover as these will be their portfolios. We also ask that each student have a dishwasher safe water bottle that is roughly 14oz in size and can fit on the correct shelf in their cubby. Water bottles must be leak proof. Please be mindful that while sippy cups are convenient, they are not developmentally appropriate for students over the age of two.

Each month on the parent board a wish list will be posted. It will have ideas of what parents can help with. The wish list will have supplies needed for crafts and activities. The wish list is not mandatory but is very appreciated.

## Items from home

Children are not to bring toys from home unless it is show and tell day. Show and tell day will be posted on the calendar and a note will be put in each child's mail box. Blankets, one stuffed animal and a small pillow are allowed for rest time, however when

rest time is over the items must be put back in the basket. Each Friday rest time items will be sent home and required to be washed before bringing them back on Monday.

## Media use

Television and other forms of media will not be used in our everyday curriculum. However, there may be times where we have a special movie day or we choose to watch a special video for our theme. Media will only be used to enhance our learning and fun.

## Discipline policy

In the circumstance when a child is having a rough time following directions and being safe, they will be sat out of the activity in a safe place to calm down for 1 minute per their age in years. They will then talk with their teacher, where they will then discuss how turn their red choices green. If the behavior persists then a parent meeting will be scheduled. If the behavior continues after the meeting a strike will be given. While we understand children at this age are learning to manage their emotions, behaviors such as hitting, kicking, biting, throwing things, destroying the classroom and any other display of physical or verbal violence/aggression will not be tolerated. We reserve the right to send a student home for the day if they cannot conduct themselves in a manner that is safe for them, other children, staff and property. Pay will still be expected as usual. In situations where property or materials are damaged, parents will be charged the full rate of damages.

## 3 Strike policy

The 3-strike policy is used to ensure all policies and procedures are being respected by all families and students. This policy is also to ensure all students conduct themselves in a safe manner. At the time of enrollment parents will sign the strikes form stating they understand the policy. Parents will also sign any time a strike is given. After the first strike care will be suspended for 3 days and a parent meeting will be scheduled. At the time of the second-strike care will be suspended for 5 days and a meeting will be scheduled. If at any time 3 strikes are given care will be terminated immediately.

## Termination of care

In the event any family wishes to terminate care we require that you give a two-week written notice. Regardless of giving a notice tuition is due for the final two weeks, whether care is provided or not. In the event that care is terminated by the provider a two-week written notice will be given to the family, unless it is in an unfortunate circumstance in which care is to be terminated immediately due to an unforeseen event.

## Potty training

We would love to help you with potty training. Parents will be required to supply Velcro pull-ups. The most important thing to remember during this transition is communication between parents/guardians and the provider is key.

We ask that children do not be transition to underwear until they are at least one week accident free at school.

## Birthday's/Holiday's

We would love to celebrate each individual student for their special day. We ask that families please fill out the form located in our family resource folders to inform us of your plans! In addition to celebrating birthdays, we will also have a little holiday party for holidays. For Christmas we ask that you please do not bring a gift from your child to another. However, if you wish to give a gift you may give an anonymous gift to the center for your child and others to enjoy. A Christmas wish list will be posted on the November and will remain up until our Christmas party.

# Tuition

Here at Kids' Ark, we believe that all children should receive the same high quality of care which is why our tuition rates apply to all ages.

Each month families will be given a calendar for each student they have in the program to fill out with days needed of care. The calendar will also ask for drop off and pick up times, we ask that times are a 15 minute estimate. The purpose of the calendar is so that management can properly schedule teachers and teachers can properly plan lessons. The calendars have no reflection of tuition unless days are added that are not on the enrollment contract. Calendars are to be turned in by the last Monday of each month.

Type of care is decided at time of enrollment; two weeks' notice is required before making any changes. Part time care is only available for ages 18 months and up.

Full Time Care (Classified as 4/5 days): \$225 Per Week Per Child

Part Time Care (Classified as 1/3 days): \$135 Per Week Per Child

Day Rate (Classified as drop-in care for days not originally on student calendar and or part of your enrollment contract): \$45 Per Day Per Child

Payments will be due each Friday for the upcoming week. Failure to make payment on the Monday before care will result in a 10\$ late fee per business day that payment is late. If the payment is not made by drop off on Monday care will not be provided, however you will still be charged for that day and the late fee will still apply. Payment is still required for any days your child(ren) are absent, this includes vacations, illness and any other reasons.

The first week's payment is due prior to care on the first day.

Payments are only accepted through Procare. Procare charges a surcharge for each transaction, this is added to tuition.

Discounts:

- ❖ 8% for Military Families
- ❖ 8% for First Responder Families
- ❖ 8% for Teacher Families

- ❖ 10% for Full time, half day, preschool students

Only full-time students qualify for discounts, only one discount is allowed per student.

# Enrollment and Deposit

Prior to enrollment all of the following forms must be completed.

- Enrollment contract
- Signed copy of handbook and policies
- Parent information brochure
- Children's record
- Immunization record
- Infant formula and feeding schedule (if applicable)
- 3 strikes policy form
- Photo permission slip
- Field trip and transportation permission slip
- Getting to know you

A deposit of 75\$ per family or \$50 per child will also be required at the time of enrollment. This fee covers the cost of paperwork and all materials needed to enroll a new child into the center. This fee is nonrefundable, regardless of starting care or not.

The first two weeks of care are considered trial time as it is important to be sure it is a good fit for all involved. These two weeks are non-refundable regardless of the final decision.

# Medication

Medication can and will only be given to a child if the parent has a doctor's note and has signed the medication release form. We cannot give medications like Tylenol.

# Immunizations and Vaccines

For the safety and well-being of all children and staff in the center we require that all children enrolled be current on all immunizations. A current copy is required for each student's file. However we do respect everyone's values, if your family is vaccine exempt you will need to sign the form as such and provide a note from your child's pediatrician.

# Illness

In the event that your child is ill please keep them home, this is for the safety of your child, the other children and teachers. If a child happens to become ill during the day, parents will be notified and required to pick up their child within the same hour they were contacted. If for any reason parents are not available the emergency contact person will be notified. A child who is ill cannot return until they either have a note from a doctor and/or have been symptom free for 24 hours, without the aid of medication. A child would need a note from a doctor if they had or seemed to have anything contagious. If you ever question if your child is ill and can attend, please always call ahead of time.

# Child Emergency Policy

Families will be required to fill out a new emergency contact form (Child's Record) each year and any time any information changes. Failure to do so will result in termination, this is because without this information it is impossible to reach families in the event of an emergency and therefore it does not allow us to provide the best care possible.

In the event of an emergency action will take place as seen fit, this means if a child is seriously injured or ill during care, 911 will be called and then parents/guardians. In less serious circumstance's parents/guardians will be notified and asked to pick up their child if needed.

## Emergencies and Natural Disasters

Kids' Ark has written policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies and natural disasters. In the unfortunate and highly unlikely event that we need to evacuate we will meet at the city hall building, once we become settled families will be notified for an immediate pick up.

In the event of a power outage, parents/guardians will be contacted for pick up if the power is not restored within 30 minutes. In the event on inclement weather parents/guardians will be contacted during a "watch" so that they are aware of our current plans, it will be encouraged that students are picked up before a warning if able, so that everyone is kept safe!

Kids' Ark practices fire drills one time per month and tornado drills at least four times per year so in the event of an unlikely emergency the children will already know what to do and be prepared. Our fire drill escape plan and tornado safety plan are posted near the main door. We will also practice at least two lock down drills per year.

After any drill we will notify parents/guardians right away.

# Paid Closure Days

The following are paid closures:

- August:
  - No Closures This Month
- September:
  - Labor Day: Monday 9/1/2025
  - ECE Conference: (Early Dismissal 12pm) Monday 9/15/2025
  - ECE Conference: Tuesday 9/16/2025-Wednesday 9/17/2025
- October:
  - Quarter 1 Professional Development Day: Friday 10/24/2025
- November:
  - Thanksgiving: Thursday 11/27/2025-Friday 11/28/2025
- December:
  - Christmas: Wednesday 12/24/2015- Friday 12/26/2025
  - New Years: Wednesday 12/31/2025
- January:
  - New Years: Thursday 1/1/2026- Friday 1/2/2026
  - MLK Day: Monday 1/19/2026
  - Quarter 2 Professional Development Day: Friday 1/30/2026
- February:
  - No Closures This Month
- March:
  - No Closures This Month
- April:
  - Easter: Friday 4/3/2026-Monday 4/6/2026
  - Quarter 3 Professional Development Day: Monday 4/27/2026
- May:
  - Memorial Day: Monday 5/25/2026
- June:
  - Juneteenth: Friday 6/19/2026
- July:
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Of July: Friday 7/3/2026-Monday 7/6/2026
  - Quarter 4 Professional Development Day: Monday 7/27/2026

If a holiday lands on a Saturday, then we will be closed the Friday before, if it is on a Sunday then we will be closed the Monday after. However, management may choose to alter open/closed holiday days depending on when the holiday falls.

# Professional Development Days

Each quarter Kids' Ark will have a professional Development Day. Professional development days are used for trainings, lesson planning, deep cleaning of all toys and an overall reset of the center. Professional Development Days will always be announced in our newsletters and calendars as well as posted to the Procure calendar.

## Weather Closures

On days with extreme weather our biggest goal is to keep all children, families and staff safe. We will judge each day individually using resources such as the 511 app and news channels. A notice will go out as soon as a decision is made. Our goal is always to notify families within one hour of opening. All weather closures are paid closures.

## Sick Closures

While we understand that an unexpected closure is a HUGE inconvenience to our families, sometimes it is unavoidable. In the instance that too many teachers have caught a bug and are too sick to provide quality care we may be forced to have a sick closure. If this were to happen a message alert would be sent out to all families ASAP! With this Kids' Ark will have a max of 8 sick days a school year that are paid closures, if for some extreme reason more days were needed these would be refunded days.

# Handbook Agreement Contract

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the terms in this handbook, therefore I understand the policies and procedures of Kids' Ark.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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