



# Parent Handbook

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Welcome</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Vision</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Core Values</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Secure Drop Off/Pick Up</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Lunch/Snack Guidelines.</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Naps</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Outdoor Play</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Clothing/Backpacks</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Birthdays</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Confidential Information</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Discipline</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Photographs</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Supplies</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Diapering/Bathroom Assistance</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Immunizations</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Health Policy</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Medication</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Fire Safety</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Tuition</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Child Abuse and Neglect</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Withdrawal</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Release of Liability</b>	<b>11</b>

## Welcome

Welcome! We are proud to invite you to the Smart Start Learning Academy. Our aim is for your association with us to have a long and mutually rewarding experience.

We are deeply committed to building a community of lifelong learners, where each child is supported, challenged, and encouraged to grow at their own pace. We invite you to help guide them on this journey as we work together to foster a peaceful, safe, and joyful environment for our children, their families, and our team.

Welcome,

Jenny McMeekan

## VISION

Our Vision Statement is where we draw our inspiration and guide us in our decisions and relationships with those we serve:

*The team at Smart Start leads children from 2 years up to pre-kindergarten within an environment that applies developmentally appropriate and educationally sound principles in learning.*

## CORE VALUES

Our Core Values provides the framework to reinforce and align with our Vision Statement.

### *Validation*

- Smart Start believes in individuals' distinctive skills and abilities and actively celebrates these contributions.

### *Security*

- Smart Start fosters a secure environment to open the doors of curiosity, inspiration, and application.

### *Social*

- Smart Start provides a platform to explore, develop, and honor social connections.

## ATTENDANCE

Designated days of attendance will be set with administration. All children must arrive prior to 9 a.m. unless otherwise arranged with staff. Please check your child's cubby/ learning folder daily for notifications.

Parents whose children are not picked up promptly by 5:30 will be charged a \$40.00 late fee.

Smart Start will be closed as indicated on the holiday school calendar and during the Coeur d'Alene School District closure snow days.

Smart Start Learning Academy is a "year-round" school, meaning we are open, and families are encouraged to bring their children, for the full twelve months.

### SECURE DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Emergency information is always kept in the school's file. Children will only be released to those that have been authorized. Children will not be released to anyone without permission from parents.

It is required by law that you or the authorized person signs in and out for your child. Be sure to sign your child in at arrival and sign out at departure each day utilizing the sheet of paper at the front of the school. Be sure to sign first and last day as well as document time of arrival and departure.

The front door opens with a code. The code should only be provided to authorized persons. Parents should refrain from providing access to the building to individuals they do not know or to children.

### LUNCH/SNACK GUIDELINES

Students will bring a water bottle, lunch, and 2 snacks every day. Lunch boxes and water bottles should be labeled clearly with the child's name.

Student lunches cannot be refrigerated at school, so please include an ice pack if the lunch is perishable. Make sure to pack a cold lunch, as we do not heat up lunches. If you would like your child to have a warm lunch, pre-heat the meal and pack it in a thermos.

### NAPS

Children at Smart Start will be encouraged to take naps. Please provide a special blanket to help them relax and feel comfortable.

Children in the Pre-K class and above who do not wish to nap will be allowed to play quietly during nap time but must be respectful of others. Students in the advanced Pre-K class will have quiet time by watching a movie, reading, or coloring.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

We believe that being out in the fresh air and exercising our bodies is very important. When the snow arrives, we will still go outside. Because of this, please always send your child in weather appropriate clothing, rain or shine.

Every parent will be provided a copy of Smart Start Learning Center's skin protectant policy and authorization form. This form outlines policies for application of sunscreen and other lotions. This form must be completed and returned to Smart Start.

## CLOTHING/BACKPACKS

Children should dress comfortably, and suitably for the weather. We ask that families do their best to label any clothing a child may remove at school.

A change of clothing should always be in the child's backpack, in case of spills or accidents. The clothing should be placed in a large plastic bag marked with their name.

In the event of the need to utilize spare clothing owned by Smart Start, please return the clothing to Smart Start. Repeated failures to do so may result in a service charge.

We require a backpack or bag for each child. The bag or backpack allows for storage of extra clothing, blanket, any schoolwork, as well as notifications.

## BIRTHDAYS

We love to celebrate birthdays at Smart Start. Parents are welcome to bring a special treat to school. Please bring enough for the entire classroom of kids. Prior to the event, please coordinate with your child's teacher.

If you do not celebrate birthdays, please let us know, so we can accommodate your child's needs.

## CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

We do not release confidential information, including addresses, demographic information, or telephone numbers of our students, to anyone, unless given permission by parent or guardian, or required by law.

## DISCIPLINE

The discipline policy at Smart Start Learning Academy is simple; we always practice kindness and respect! Disturbing others, unkind or inappropriate words, and/or physically harming others or themselves is never allowed. When a child

makes a poor choice, our first step is to have the child practice the preferred behavior. If the behavior continues a “time out/ break” is given.

Staff will make all efforts to advise parents about discipline that occurs at school and work with parents towards solutions. Smart Start reserves the right to withdraw a child from admission if appropriate for the best interest of other children or staff.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

To protect the privacy and safety of the children in our care, Smart Start follows guidelines regarding the use of photographs and videos.

Photographs and videos of children may be taken during daily activities for the purposes of documentation, family communication, and celebrating learning. These images and videos may be shared securely through ProCare, where they are viewable by staff and families within the program. Staff may use personal devices to take and send photos only through ProCare or management-approved platforms.

On occasion, Smart Start may utilize a child’s image on public platforms (such as social media, the school website, or marketing materials). This will only occur if explicit written permission has not been withheld by the parent or guardian, as indicated in the section below.

Staff are strictly prohibited from using personal devices to photograph or record children for any personal use.

Management may use personal devices and apps to take and organize photos for classroom planning, newsletters, etc.

Any parent/guardian may withdraw or restrict social media permissions by sending an email to the Director or documenting in application at the time of admission. Parents/guardians may update their media permissions at any time by submitting a written request.

## SUPPLIES

Smart Start withdraws a \$100.00 supply fee twice per year, which allows teachers to have a spending budget for classroom supplies. The supply fee is withdrawn in September (for school supplies) which is per child, as well as in June (for summer supplies), per family.

## DIAPERING/BATHROOM ASSISTANCE

Smart Start maintains a separate diapering and bathroom assistance policy and procedure, which must be followed by all staff members. This policy is available to any parents/guardians upon request. Children must be fully potty trained before moving into the 3-year-old classroom. This means they: can recognize and communicate the need to use the toilet, use the toilet independently (no pull-ups).

### IMMUNIZATIONS

A copy of your child's immunization record is needed on or before their start date.

Smart Start Learning Academy accepts all immunization waivers. In the event of a disease outbreak, the children with exemptions (to that particular disease) will likely have to be excluded from care for a period of time (the amount of time will be dependent on the disease).

### HEALTH POLICY

At Smart Start, the health and well-being of all children and staff are our top priorities. To maintain a safe and healthy environment, we ask families to follow the guidelines below regarding illness, communicable diseases, and medical situations.

Children who are ill should be kept at home to rest and recover, and to prevent the spread of illness to others. A child **must be kept home** if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- Oral temperature of 100.0°F or higher
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting or nausea
- Severe cough or difficulty breathing
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Cold with fever, green mucus, or persistent sneezing
- Head lice
- Any contagious illness or unexplained rash

Children may return to care only after being symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication (e.g., fever reducers, anti-diarrheal medicine, etc.).

If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness (e.g., chickenpox, measles, hand-foot-and-mouth disease), a written clearance from a physician is required before the child may return to school.

If a child begins to show signs of illness during the day (e.g., fever, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rash), the parent or guardian will be contacted immediately and must arrange for prompt pick-up. The child will be kept comfortable and supervised in a separate area until they are picked up.

Parents/guardians must inform staff of any medical, emotional, or environmental condition that could affect the child's health, safety, or participation in activities. Parents will be notified in writing if their child has been exposed to a contagious condition while in their classroom, at daycare, allowing families to monitor for symptoms.

Minor Injuries (e.g., scrapes or bruises) will be treated on-site with appropriate first aid and documented. In the case of a serious injury or medical emergency, staff will call 911 and contact the parent/guardian immediately. If necessary, your child will be transported to the nearest hospital by emergency services.

## MEDICATION

All prescription and nonprescription medications will be administered with a medication authorization form that is filled out by a parent or guardian. Prescription medications must be labeled with the student's name, instructions on how and when to administer it, dosage, and frequency of administration. Prescription medications must be in the original child proof container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name of the medication, the date the prescription was filled, the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription, the medication's expiration date, the administration, and storage. A parent signature will be required for each medication/prescription.

## FIRE SAFETY

We follow all fire safety regulations as required by state law to ensure a safe environment and to prepare for emergencies effectively. Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are installed and maintained according to state fire safety regulations.

Fire drills are conducted monthly to ensure children and staff are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures. This procedure helps children learn how to respond to a fire emergency in a calm and organized manner. We appreciate the cooperation of staff and families in reinforcing the importance of fire safety.

In the event of a fire drill or actual emergency:

- A fire alarm or signal will sound to initiate evacuation.
- Teachers will guide children calmly and quickly to the nearest designated exit.
- Children will be led to the designated outdoor assembly area, away from the building.
- The Director or designated staff member will conduct a room-by-room check to ensure the building is clear.
- Teachers will take roll and confirm that all children are accounted for.
- Classes will remain outside until clearance to re-enter is given by emergency personnel or proper authorities.
- If appropriate, teachers will begin to contact parents/guardians.

## TUITION

Tuition is withdrawn on a bi-weekly basis. Returned checks are subject to a \$45.00 fee.

No refunds for days absent due to illnesses, or vacations, or school exclusion due to disease outbreak, etc. If your child is not able to attend their scheduled day, we do not permit students to “switch” to a different day.

Changes to schedule by parents require a thirty (30) day notice. Tuition rates are subject to change, but thirty day notice will be given to families.

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to update forms as necessary, such as new vaccinations, change of phone number, address, payment info, etc.

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

Smart Start Learning Academy maintains a separate child abuse and neglect policy and procedure, in accordance with state and local law. This policy is available to parents/guardians upon request. Staff members are trained annually on these procedures. All staff are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to protect children's safety.

## WITHDRAWAL

Smart Start Learning Academy requires that you email a 30-day notice to [smartstartcda@gmail.com](mailto:smartstartcda@gmail.com) for any changes to schedule or to withdraw.

Smart Start Learning Academy reserves the right to withdraw a child from enrollment at any time, at its sole discretion, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the child, other children, staff, or the overall learning environment.

## RELEASE OF LIABILITY

By signing this handbook, I hereby release and forever discharge Smart Start Learning Academy, including its owners, directors, officers, employees, agents, legal representatives, successors, and assigns, from any and all claims, demands, causes of action, liabilities, or damages—whether known or unknown—arising out of or related to any injury, loss, or damage to person or property, including but not limited to injuries resulting in death.

This release applies to any incident that may occur as a result of participation in any activities, programs, or events conducted by or associated with Smart Start Learning Academy, regardless of whether such injury or damage was caused wholly or in part by the negligence of or any of its representatives.

I acknowledge Smart Start Learning Academy Parent Handbook and agree to the release of liability and to follow all requirements.

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Student Name

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Signature

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Parent/Guardian Printed Name

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Date