



Cultivating excellence in faith and education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARENT HANDBOOK

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MISSION

The Academy nurtures Islamic identity and provides academic excellence for our students to prepare them for the future. Together with the community, we strive to raise confident Muslims of character who will serve with Compassion, Integrity, and Respect.

PROGRAM

Licensing

The Early Childhood Program at the El-Sewedy International Academy of Cincinnati (hereafter referred to as Academy or school) is a pre-school and pre-kindergarten licensed by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) as a preschool for children ages 3-5 years. The license and the rules and applicable laws are available for review on request or may be obtained from the Ohio Department of Education. The department also maintains a toll-free complaint number, which is on file and will be provided to you upon request. The school is licensed to serve 3–5-year-old children. The Licensing Inspection Report is available for review in the office.

Educational Philosophy and Goals

The Academy utilizes the Montessori philosophy which is, “to educate the human potential” by means of a prepared environment which provides a wide variety of materials, employs a multi-sensory approach to learning, and frees the child to choose activities according to individual interests, abilities, and talents within certain set limits. The opportunity to participate in one’s own education provides the child a context for growing academically, socially, and emotionally. The goal at the International Academy is to create a community where our children can grow into independent learners.

Curriculum

The Academy’s early childhood curriculum is aligned with standards of the Ohio Department of Education.

Staffing and Student Supervision

All teaching is under the supervision of instructors who have met the requirements of a program team leader as specified in paragraphs (F)(2)(a) to (F)(2)(c) of Ohio Department of Education School Age Child Care (SACC) Licensing Program rule.

Each member of our staff meets the qualifications set by state laws and SACC licensing rules. The Academy exceeds the state requirement for child-caregiver ratio (teacher/student ratio).

Children will not be left unattended at any time. Two or more staff members will supervise the children during instructional and play time.

Staff members are recruited, employed, assigned, evaluated, and provided in-service education in accordance with Academy Board policies and without discrimination on the basis of age, color, national origin, race, sex, or disability.

ADMISSIONS AND ATTENDANCE

Children reaching their third birthday on or before September 30th and who are fully toilet trained are eligible for admission.

Since enrollment is limited, the following priorities are followed in accepting students for admission:

1. Currently enrolled students moving to the next level.
2. Siblings, brothers, or sisters of current students.
3. Preference is given to achieving a harmony or balance as to age, gender, race, national origin, or ethnic diversity.

In any instance, the Academy does not and shall not discriminate in enrollment on the basis of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.

Classroom Placement

Students are assigned to specific classrooms to achieve and maintain a balance of a multi-level classroom with respect to age, gender, and a comfortable fit in the classroom environment. Children will remain with their classroom teachers until they are ready to move to the next level appropriate to their educational, emotional, and social needs. Under very limited circumstances, the principal, in consultation with the child's parents and teachers, may assign the student to a different classroom. Placement in another classroom will only be considered if it is in the best interest of the child and will minimally disrupt the operation and learning experience of the other students in the affected classrooms.

Arrival and Dismissal

The Academy's early childhood program is five full days a week from 8:15 AM to 3:30 PM.

All children should arrive on time, class will start punctually. All children must be picked up within ten (10) minutes of the expiration of their session.

Children may be dropped off and picked up through the monitored car line during scheduled drop off and pick up times. If the child is dropped off late or needs to be picked up early, the parent/guardian will need to park their car and come into the school to sign children in or out at the office. If someone other than the listed parent/guardian or authorized person is to pick up the child, signed written instructions must be received specifying who is to assume responsibility for the child. Permission for someone other than the parent/guardian to pick up a child may be submitted through email in case of a last-minute request.

Daily Schedule

A typical session may consist of a group lesson geared to the attention span of children ages 3 to 5 years. The group is then divided into smaller units for informal lessons of shorter duration. The students are then permitted to choose courses of work for independent, though supervised, activity. A period of time for supervised activities is

allotted in the gymnasium or outdoors. There are also times with music and stories incorporated into daily activities. The students have a scheduled one-hour nap time in the afternoon. Children are assigned cots and can bring a blanket and/or small pillow for napping or resting. The daily schedule is available from the teacher in the classroom.

Snack

In keeping with good nutrition, healthy snacks are provided on a rotating basis. Milk, juice, crackers, fresh fruits, and vegetables are some suggestions. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to alert the school to any allergies or dietary restrictions.

Children may bring a nutritious lunch from home or purchase one from the lunch menu. A list of written nutritional information and suggestions will be provided to parents.

Independent Toileting

Early childhood classes are established as academic environments where all students must be toilet trained. Students who have frequent accidents or who are wearing pull-ups are not considered toilet trained and will be sent home until they are completely trained.

Progress Monitoring, Reports, and Parent-Teacher Conferences

Close communication between parents and teachers is encouraged. Progress is monitored through observation of the child's performance alongside general measures or expected outcomes. A simple progress report that focuses on work habits and behavior will be sent home regularly. A more detailed progress report will be sent at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarter listing achievements for the early childhood year in various curriculum areas. Areas included are personal and social development, language and literacy, beginning writing skills, mathematical development, science exploration, social studies, Qur'an, Arabic, Islamic Studies, fine arts, and physical development.

Conferences create a better understanding between home and school, aid in reporting student progress, and help to meet the individual needs of each child. Parents are encouraged to consult with teachers throughout the year. To schedule a conference, contact the teacher directly by phone or e-mail.

Discipline

Under no circumstances will physical force be used. In the event a child becomes unruly or disruptive to other children and/or materials or in the event the child may constitute a threat to him or herself, he/she will be removed to a quiet space within the confines of the environment and in the presence of supervision for a period of time. Under certain circumstances, the child may be removed from the classroom for a period of time and/or sent home.

Withdrawal/Dismissal

The school recognizes that children all behave differently, and many behavioral patterns may be demonstrated. If it is determined at any time during the school year that a child does not or cannot perform in accordance with established rules, disciplinary, health or safety policies, the child will be unenrolled.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the school and to observe their child's class. Requests must be made at least one day in advance. Parents/guardians may not bring other children or infants into the classrooms. Parents may not engage with the students or teacher during these observations.

Parents/guardians are invited to volunteer their time and talents. The Academy will be happy to provide ideas for help in the classroom.

Field Trips and Chaperones

The Academy believes that students learn through experience, and field trips are an important part of learning. A fall and spring field trip are scheduled each year. Occasionally, a learning program is brought in-school in lieu of a trip outside of the school.

The role of a chaperone is an important one and requires accepting certain responsibilities. School policy requires that all chaperones have a non-conviction/non-guilty form on file before becoming a chaperone. The Academy also requires that all field trip chaperones be at least 18 years of age. Additional field trip chaperone guidelines are available upon request. These guidelines help ensure that school sponsored field trips result in safe and rewarding experiences for all participants.

Birthdays and Other Celebrations

The school recognizes that some families want to share a celebration of their child's birthday with their classmates. Since there are different scholarly opinions regarding birthday celebrations, the school avoids confusing the students asking staff, parents, and students not to bring cakes or goody bags to school on the occasion of their child's birthday or to distribute invitations or birthday gifts on school premises. If a parent wishes to celebrate a child's memorization of parts of the Qur'an or wishes to contribute to Eid celebrations or Jum'ah treats, the school will greatly appreciate the contribution.

Please consider sending something for the class to enjoy such as:

- A game for the classroom
- A classroom book or plant.
- A classroom set of items for each child to keep such as pencils, pens, erasers, markers, etc.

SCHOOL AND HOME COMMUNICATIONS

The Academy strives to communicate information to parents in a timely fashion and in various ways. The following documents and means of communication will be used:

- Weekly Newsletter - A weekly all-school newsletter that lets parents know of upcoming events and other in-school news. This is sent via email at the end of each week.
- Teacher Newsletters – All classroom teachers send home or post a weekly newsletter to inform parents of what will take place in the classroom for the week.

- **School Calendar** – An annual calendar is available in the front office and on the school website to inform parents of special events, early dismissals, parent-teacher conferences, school quarter beginning and end dates, and days off school.
- **Website** – The Academy website, www.intlacademy.org, contains enrollment information, the school calendar, and other information pertinent to the school.
- **Broadcast Text or Phone Calls** – In the event of an emergency, broadcast texts and/or phone calls will be made to all the families. Broadcast texts are also utilized for sending out the weekly school newsletter.
- **Email** – The student information management system is the main method used to communicate information to parents.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Should a child become ill at school, the staff will utilize the Student Health Assessment Procedure to immediately evaluate the student's health concerns. The parent/guardian will be notified to take the child home if the illness warrants. The child will be isolated but remain in the presence of a staff member until the parent arrives. Note: A medical emergency authorization form signed by a parent or guardian must be submitted to the school office by the first day of the school year.

The school will not administer drugs or prescription medications except in the event of life-threatening circumstances.

If a child has had a fever, vomited or had diarrhea within the past 24 hours, the child must be kept home for at least an additional 24 hours in order to be certain that the illness has passed and is not contagious. In the case of concerns such as COVID-19, CDC guidelines will be followed, and extra precautions will be taken.

First Aid

The administrator and head teachers are trained in first aid. On field trips, someone will always accompany the children who is trained in first aid. A First Aid box is located in the main office. A First Aid box will be taken on all field trips.

Incident Reports

In the event of an accident or injury, the school will complete an incident report. A copy of the report will be kept on record at the school for the year. A copy will be provided to the parent/guardian.

Child Abuse

In the event a staff member has any suspicion of child abuse, the law requires that the local Children's Protective Service be notified immediately.

Sunscreen, Lotions and Lip Balm

Parents can write a note requesting sunscreen or non-medicated lotion be applied to their child. Parents will supply the sunscreen or lotion in a clear plastic bag marked with the

child's name. Sunscreen and lotion cannot be shared with another student. Due to allergies and asthma, NO SPRAY sunscreen is permitted!

Weather Emergency

In the case of severe weather, children will be taken to a safe area in the school. Established safety protocols will be followed. A Fire Emergency and Weather Alert Plan are posted in each room.

General Emergencies

In the case of fire, or other threats to children's safety, the staff will follow the practiced emergency protocols that are contained in the Academy's Emergency Operations Plan. Fire and other emergency drills are held regularly throughout the school year.

Inclement Weather/Snow Days

In the event of bad weather or other situations requiring the school to close, the school will email parents/guardians, post closings, delay alerts, or early dismissal with Channel 12 WKRC and Channel 19 FOX and send messages through phone or text alerts.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease.

1. The school shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.
2. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall immediately be isolated and a parent or guardian will be notified to pick up the child:
 - a. Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24-hour period).
 - b. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face, or to make a whooping sound.
 - c. Difficult or rapid breathing.
 - d. Yellowish skin or eyes.
 - e. Conjunctivitis.
 - f. Temperature of 100 degrees when in combination with any other sign of illness.
 - g. Untreated infected skin patches.
 - h. Unusually dark urine or gray or white stool.
 - i. Stiff neck
 - j. Unusual spots or rashes.
 - k. Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
 - l. Vomiting.
 - m. Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

3. All staff has been trained by a registered nurse or has taken a class in the recognition of communicable disease, hand washing and disinfecting procedures.
4. The school's policy concerning management of communicable disease among its employees is as follows:
 - a. Employees exhibiting signs or symptoms of a communicable disease shall remain home until signs or symptoms have passed. They may return at their discretion. A substitute teacher will be called to replace them. A teacher exhibiting symptoms while at school shall be asked to isolate herself from others and a replacement will be called.
5. Procedures for isolating and discharging a child who displays signs or symptoms of a communicable disease are as follows:
 - a. Cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used by other children.
 - b. Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
 - c. Made comfortable with a blanket and a cot. The blanket shall be washed, and the cot disinfected before being used by another child.
 - d. The child shall be observed carefully for a worsening condition.
 - e. After the child has been made comfortable, the parent or guardian is to be called and the child dismissed to the parent or guardian, or person designated by the parent or guardian as soon as practical.
 - f. The child may be readmitted to school after he or she has been symptom free for 24 hours of fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or that he or she is under a doctor's care and has been declared by the doctor to no longer be contagious.
6. The Ohio Department of Health's "Child Day Care Communicable Disease Chart" is located on the bulletin board in the office for reference.
7. It is the policy of the school to immediately notify a parent of a possible communicable disease. It is also the policy of the school to immediately notify all parents if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease. A medical alert will be sent home to all children in the class of the child sent home with a communicable disease.
8. If a child is discovered to have a communicable disease the school must be notified by phone immediately to ensure that all parents of children who may have been exposed are also notified.
9. It is the policy of the school to administer medication only in life-threatening circumstances. Minor cough and cold remedies and antibiotics will not be administered.

- a. Parents who feel that their child may need such a medication will be required to fill out the “Medication Administration Form.” A new form and a new medication must be refilled every six months.
 - b. Medicine must be in its original container with label attached and dosages specified.
 - c. In the case of asthmatic inhalants or the need to administer an injection for anaphylactic shock, the parent must instruct the child’s teachers on their usage.
 - d. Parents will be informed in writing if the child has received any treatment at school.
 - e. In the event of any administration of life-saving medications, the child’s parent or guardian will be called and the child must be picked up from the school by the parent or guardian for evaluation by a physician or for parental observation. The child may return to class only with a doctor’s written permission.
 - f. Medications and all pertinent instructions shall be kept in the First Aid box or in the office.
10. The school’s policy regarding a mildly ill child is as follows:
- a. If a child is experiencing minor cold symptoms but no communicable disease symptoms, he or she may attend class if a cough or cold remedy is administered before arrival at the school. The child must be able to blow his or her own nose and to cover his or her mouth when coughing.
 - b. A child who does not feel well enough to participate in activities but who is exhibiting no symptoms of communicable disease shall be observed carefully for signs or symptoms of a worsening condition. If such symptoms occur, the child will be isolated from the group until a parent or guardian can pick-up the child from the school.

FINANCIAL AND PROCEDURAL POLICIES

The current fee schedule is available in the main office all applications require a non-refundable application fee for processing. On acceptance and on or before the first day of class, all fees, depending on the payment schedule chosen, must be paid in full. In the event a student is admitted and withdraws on or after the first day of school, the first tuition payment shall be non-refundable. In the event of a withdrawal on or after the first school month, please refer to the Financial Agreement statement on the Academy’s School Fee Form.

Should a child be withdrawn with the intention of reinstatement at a later date (for example, for the purpose of travel or a vacation) fees shall be payable for the entire duration. If a parent chooses to withdraw a child during this period and not pay the tuition payments, the school may fill the then available space. If on return, the parent wishes to reinstate the child on a space as available basis, a new application fee will be charged.

All tuition payment plans are for the academic year and are only for your convenience. No decrease or adjustment is made for vacations, illness, snow days or other days due to circumstances beyond the school's control. Failure to submit fees on time shall jeopardize the child's enrollment.

Grievance Policy

Introduction & Purpose:

The school's success in its mission of providing quality education in an Islamic environment relies heavily on the interaction between the school and home. Parents are encouraged to keep up with their child's academic progress and to attend all orientations and meetings announced by the school. The school encourages parents to contact their child's teacher whenever they have a question or concern regarding their child. If a parent would like to speak to a teacher in person, he/she should call the office or e-mail the teacher directly to make an appointment. Having an appointment helps to ensure full attention to the matter at hand and a productive meeting.

Suggestions for improvement of the school and its various procedures are always welcome. It should not be assumed that verbal comments or suggestions will be retained and/or recalled by any staff members of the school. Everything should be in writing.

As in any family, it is recognized that in a school community there are bound to be areas in which we do not all think alike. When a matter is significant enough, we need to communicate our feelings, thoughts and grievances. The question is how this communication can most effectively take place. The following Grievance Policy was developed as a guide for parents and guardians to solve possible grievance issues in the most effective and timely manner.

Grievance Policy:

The grievance policy is designed to provide a means to ensure that conflicts will be resolved amicably, justly, and quickly at the lowest possible level of administration. Parents who have a complaint make a sincere attempt to resolve it by contacting and requesting a meeting with the concerned parties. In the meantime, the school staff member who receives the complaint strives to resolve concerns and complaints whenever possible. The complaint should be received and addressed at the level closest to which the complaint originated. While informal resolutions are encouraged, the more formal process outlined below may be used for complaints for which an informal process was not satisfactory.

If a parent has a grievance or an issue that needs to be addressed, the following protocol is to be followed in the sequence given below. If there is no satisfaction at the first level, then it is the parent's right to take it to the next level.

Step 1: Call the office or e-mail the teacher directly involved in the issue to make an appointment to speak with the teacher. The teacher and/or the parent/guardian may request that the principal be present if needed.

Step 2: If the parent does not feel the issue has been resolved, the parent may then inform the teacher and make an appointment through the office to meet with the principal. The principal is entrusted with handling all the school issues and delegated by the Board of Trustees with the authority to have the final decision for any grievances.

Step 3: After meeting with the principal, if the parent feels that the issue is still not

resolved, the parent must inform the principal about his/her concern in writing within 10 school days. Thereafter,

- a. The principal will present the parent's written complaint to the Board of Trustees within 10 school days from the time of receiving the written complaint.
- b. The final decision remains with the principal.

Please note that if at any point during this process you do not receive an acknowledgement of your written communication within the time frame indicated, you should call the Main Office and request that an office staff member follows up to make sure that your communication has been received.

Parents may start the process at Step 2 or Step 3 if the issue to be addressed is something that a teacher is not directly involved with and has no control over, such as general school rules or policies.

Unresolved Grievances:

It is understood that within any family, disagreements may occur from time to time. In the school context, it is also understood that part of the principal's professional responsibility is to attempt to resolve grievances as they occur. On rare occasions, an issue may not be resolved to the satisfaction of the parent whereby they may seek further action beyond the principal. In this case, the parent may ask the principal to submit the parent's written complaint (Step 3 above) to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Thereafter,

1. The principal will present the parent's written complaint to the President of the Board of Directors within 10 school days from the time of receiving the parent's request.
2. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees may choose to discuss the concern with the principal directly or may assign a subcommittee of two or three Board members to discuss the issue with the principal. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees or Board Subcommittee will work with the principal to try to find a way to resolve the issue. The principal and/or the parent/guardian may request that the parent/guardian be present during the initial discussion.
3. The final decision remains with the principal. The principal will give the parent a written reply within 10 school days after presenting the complaint to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Board Subcommittee (if applicable) will also be given a copy of the reply.

Please note that the school seeks to ensure students' personal information is properly safeguarded and is used only for legitimate purposes and only when absolutely necessary. Therefore, school personnel, including the principal, may not be able to share all details of any circumstance or situation.

****Important! Please Note!**

Under no circumstances should a parent call or text a staff member on his/her home phone or cell phone. Staff members may be contacted through the school office or via school

email. Also, under no circumstances should a parent contact another parent or confront another student regarding any school related incident. School related incidents where your child and another student are involved should be handled through the teacher, or principal as outlined above.

Any parent who fails to follow these procedures will jeopardize his/her child's/children's enrollment.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the parents' responsibility to:

1. Understand that the state law requires all parents to properly care for, train, educate, discipline, and control their child.
2. Accept the teacher's/administrator's authority in the school.
3. Be available to confer with school personnel concerning their child.
4. Direct their concerns regarding the education of their child to the professional most directly involved.
5. Be financially responsible for any damage to personal or school property committed by their child.

Any conduct that is detrimental to the interests of the school, including inappropriate language and/or behavior by a parent, as determined by school leadership, may lead to consequences up to and including the loss of his/her child's/children's enrollment. Also, if a family does not pay the tuition when due, or in any other way violates the policies laid out in the School Handbook, then such conduct may lead to consequences up to and including the loss of his/her child's/children's enrollment at the school.

The school does not necessarily expect agreement, but registration of a student in the school assumes compliance with all rules and regulations.

Permission, Communication Change, Extended Absence and Other Forms

The appropriate completed forms are required from parents or guardians for:

- Absences (for one-day illness, a phone call to the school office may be sufficient.)
- A doctor's note is required for an absence of more than two days.
- Participation in after school functions
- Medical appointments during school hours
- Change in student transportation
- Students walking or riding bikes to school
- Students going on school sponsored field trips
- Leave of absences (i.e. vacations, travel) beyond two days

EL-SEWEDY INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF CINCINNATI
EARLY CHILDHOOD PARENT HANDBOOK

I / We _____ parents/guardian of

_____ acknowledge that we will abide by the school policies in this handbook and other provisions and conditions applicable to the International Academy of Cincinnati.

Student's Name: _____

Date

Print Name

Signature

Print Name

Signature