



# **SMARTFIT KIDS**

## **Parent Handbook**

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# Smart Fit Kids

# Parent Handbook

## 2022-2023

# Introduction

Welcome to SmartFit Kids! We are excited about working together and forming a relationship with you and your child. Our goal is to provide a welcoming, safe and developmentally appropriate environment for every child.

This handbook is designed to ensure that your family has a rewarding experience with SmartFit Kids (SFK). In the handbook we have tried to anticipate many of your questions about our program. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the program's policies and procedures. We strive to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate the transition between home and school. Daily communication and a sense of trust between parents and staff are vital.

Our goal is to provide the highest quality care and education for children and to ensure the parents are valued and respected. To accomplish this we depend on parents to be responsible and respectful active child care consumers. We expect parents to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures that are outlined. Please provide us with all necessary information and be open and honest with us regarding your feedback about the program. We welcome your comments, questions, suggestions and concerns about your child's experience and the program. We understand that there is nothing more important than your child's education and care experiences.

Given the nature of an ever changing quality of education during these uncertain times, this handbook is a "living" document. You will be notified of formal policy changes during the year, via a written policy notice through email. In addition the handbook will be updated as needed. We thank you for choosing the SmartKid Fit program!

# Background Information about SmartFit Kids

Mrs. Bixia Pan is the program director for SmartFit Kids. She began her career as a Kindergarten teacher in her home country of China. Mrs. Pan has always had a passion for education. During her time as a Kindergarten teacher, she showed great compassion and commitment to her students. After working so closely with children after two years, she decided to continue her education and pursue her Bachelor's Degree in Electronics Engineering and a Master Degree in International Technology Management.

After Mrs. Pan earned her degree; she became a Network Design Engineer. During her time as an Engineer she never lost her love for education and she wanted to inspire people she worked with. While she traveled internationally with other Engineers she realized that she really missed working with children. In 2013, Mrs. Pan decided to pursue her true passion of educating children by opening SmartFit Kids.

Mrs. Pan understood what working families were facing to find a quality after school program while she struggled to find her own care for her children. So when Mrs. Pan opened, Mrs. Pan believes that children need academic support and exercise, she hopes that SmartFit Kids will motivate children to pursue physical fitness and academic achievement. Mrs. Pan can bring these values to families through her program. Helping children to learn the importance of hard work, kindness, respectfulness, responsibility, honesty and integrity these are the values that influence SmartFit Kids.

Today, Mrs. Pan and her husband of thirteen years spend their days at SmartFit Kids and they are very hands-on. In addition to hybrid e-learning, pre-k program, before and after school, we offer foreign languages, STEM courses, piano lessons, chess club, art club, Taekwondo and Summer camp.

# More Information about SmartFit Kids

- Smart Fit Kids is a Licensed Childcare Center for grade Pre-K through 8 grade.
- SmartFit Kids is a participation member of Maryland Excels.
- Academic enrichment programs include foreign languages and STEM programs and tutoring services.
- We follow all of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regulations concerning health and safety.
- Our Teachers are qualified by Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to help the children with hybrid e-learning, curriculum and the completion of homework.
- SmartFit Kids has a Twakendo program taught by expert instructors.
- SmartFit Kids offer transportation to and from school.
- We are opened when schools are closed for certain holidays, breaks or inclement weather
- We accommodate planned and unplanned early dismissals or late openings.
- Easy transitions to and from school and the summertime program.
- Certified teachers run STEM and Adventure based summer programs.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

**We believe that the most important part of quality care is having a safe, developmentally appropriate, nurturing place for children to learn and grow. To help children develop academic, physical, healthy, emotional, and social skills in order to be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, and gentle citizens filled with integrity and considerate to others. We want to help spark and cultivate interest in STEM and give every child an opportunity to explore science, technology, engineering and math. We will create a learning goal for each individual child because we understand that every child learns differently. We will learn each child's interest, strive to create a variety of different activities based on our lesson, give the students different options to learn the content, and work with families to best understand how we can help their child thrive.**

**Our staff's goal is to fuel each student's ambitions by customizing their academic support, enrichment activities, and physical activity in order to reduce the risk behaviors threatening today's young people.**

**Quality care is defined through:**

- **Small group sizes and low ratios**
- **Strong bonds and respect between caregiver and child**
- **Educated teachers/ caregivers**
- **An emphasis on child/ teacher interactions and relationships**
- **Ongoing training and development for each caregiver**

- **Efficient communication with families**
- **A developmentally appropriate curriculum**
- **Well organized, extensive environments that are constantly changing to provide something new**
- **Strong family/ caregiver relations and parental involvement**

## **Admission Policy**

We accept all children regardless of race, sex, creed or color. Our program serves children from 3 years old to 14 years old. We are licensed through the State of Maryland. Enrollment forms are accepted year-round. Children will be admitted into the center on a first-come, first-serve basis depending on the availability within your child's age group and program.

## **Hours of Operation**

### **Monday through Friday**

Before School Program: 7am – Start of School

After School Program: End of School – 6:00pm

## **Enrollment**

Students enrolling in SmartFit Kids Pre-School must be at least 3 years of age upon time of enrollment. Pre-School students must be toilet trained before admission to our program. Students enrolling in our School-Aged programs must be at least 5 years of age and/or in Kindergarten upon enrollment. Our School-Aged program is open to children attending Schools in the surrounding Areas of Anne Arundel County. *Please contact us before enrollment/registration to clarify whether we can provide transportation to and/or from your child's school.*

The following forms must be completed and submitted for each child to the director before the first day of enrollment:

1. Emergency Form (OCC-1214)

2. Physical Health Inventory (OCC-1215)
3. Immunization Form/Certificate (DHMH 896)
4. Allergy Action Plan (if applicable)
5. Asthma Action Plan (if applicable)
6. IEP or IFSP Plan (If applicable, we request parent provide a copy of IEP/IFSP)
7. Blood Lead Testing Certificate (DHMH 4620)
8. Health Inventory Addendum (required for children younger than six; Parents must submit form within 30 days)
9. A Parent's Guide to Regulated Child Care Booklet
10. Tuition Agreement Form

**Note:** If your child has Allergies or Asthma, we can administer medication under the following conditions. The medicine must be updated and directions of use by the doctor written on the outside of the container, we must have a Medicine Action Plan and the Medication Administration Form completed and submitted. All forms are available on our website and can be downloaded. If you do not have internet access, copies of the forms can be sent to you. Currently we have no students that have an IEP or IFSP Plan. If there is, we request parents provide a copy of IEP/IFSP.

## Registration

All the registration information is provided to you via email or on the SmartFit Kids website. The parent(s) of each child must complete a registration form (found online) and submit it with a \$100 non-refundable yearly registration fee. A child may be registered for enrollment in the program at any time during the year. Registered children who cannot be immediately enrolled will be placed on a waitlist. When an opening occurs, we refer to this list. Parents of registered children are contacted for enrollment according to the date on the registration. If a parent removes a child from the program in May and does not pay for June, the child will be put at the bottom of the waiting list. The parent may risk the chance to be in the program the next school year.

Registration and Enrollment forms can be downloaded from our website; [www.smartfitkidsacademy.com](http://www.smartfitkidsacademy.com). Parents are required to complete and submit all necessary forms via email, mail, or in person prior to the start date established on your registration. The tuition for the first week of enrollment is due at time of registration.



# Requesting Changes in Schedule

Families enrolled at SmartFit Kids wanting to change programs may do so by requesting a written change in schedule at least 30 days prior to the month where the desired change is to occur. Changes in schedule are strictly done on an individual basis. Requests may be granted if desired programs are not full. All requests must be approved by the Director before changes can begin. Changes can NOT be made during the last 30 days without a written notice to cancel enrollment at SmartFit Kids.

## Fees

- \$ 100.00 non-refundable registration fee per child.
- Late pick-up \$ 5.00/ minute
- Tuition is due on Friday for the following week. Tuition received after Wednesday will incur a \$ 10.00 late fee
- A 10% discount is offered to families who have two or more children enrolled in the program.

## Cost for Preschool

- Program Enrollment Options  
With Extended Care
- 3 Years Old: (Monday - Friday, 7am-6pm) \$350/week
- 4 Years Old: (Monday - Friday, 7am-6pm) \$330/week
- 5 years old: (Monday - Friday, 7am-6pm) \$310/week

## Cost for Before and After care

- 5 days - Before/After Care (Monday - Friday, 7am - School Start, School Dismissal - 6pm) - \$185/week

- 5 days - After Care for school age (Monday - Friday, School Dismissal- 6:00pm) - \$165/week
- 5 days - Before Care Only (Monday - Friday, 7:00am- School start) - \$135/week
- 5 days - After Care for Preschool ( Monday - Friday, school Dismissal - 6:00pm) - \$185/week
- 5 days - All inclusive of after school care, school day off and clubs ( Monday - Friday, 7am - 6:00pm), \$250/week

## **Tuition Payments**

All payments must be made in advance prior to your children attending SmartFit Kids. Tuition is still required if your children are absent from SmartFit Kids, as our operation expenses are fixed and our staff wages are dependent upon full enrollment of each child. If your child is suspended from the program, there is NO REFUND DUE for that particular child's tuition. In addition, there is NO REFUND OR CREDIT DUE to other members of the same family.

Recurring payment via ACH is a preferred method of payment. You can also pay your tuition via check. Make all checks or money orders payable to Smart Fit Kids. Include on your check or money order your child's first and last names, the program that your child attends, and the center name. Cash is also accepted but it must be placed in a sealed envelope and given to the director on duty. Receipts will be given if requested. Tuition is subject to change with a two- week notice.

Returned checks will incur a \$25 returned check fee and all other bank charges.

## **Withdrawal**

In the event your child withdraws from Smartfit Kids, we ask that parents please give the Director a one month written notice. Any family wishing to return will be required to re-register (if spaces are available) and will be responsible for all enrollment fees. A child is considered withdrawn if the child is absent for four (4) or more consecutive days, and the center has not been contacted. To re-enroll, all registration fees will need to be paid again.

## **Non-Payment Procedures**

The program may dismiss or suspend services for non-payment of tuition fees. A charge of \$ 25.00 will be assessed each time an account payment is declined. If payment is late there will be a \$ 10.00 fee added to your tuition. However, that payment must include the current tuition and the associated late fees. Three or more late payments may result in the termination of enrollment. If payment is made prior to being sent to collections, service may be resumed, but only for the first time delayed payment situations.

## **FINANCIAL AGREEMENT**

I am agreeing to the following upon enrollment of my child in the SmartFit Kids (SFK) Before and/or After School and E-Learning Program:

1. I understand that I am responsible for all financial obligations related to this enrollment and agree to the fees and policies stated in the financial contract.
2. I will pay for any property damage caused by my child and acknowledge that Smart Fit Kids is not responsible for students' lost, stolen, or damaged personal property.
3. Tuition is due on Friday for the following week. Payments not received on Friday are subject to \$20 late fee. If payment has not been received by Tuesday at 12:00pm, we will not be able to pick up your child until full payment is received. Regular tuition is required for school break regardless of attendance during the school year. Fee's for week camp will be determined depending on the type of field trip that is arranged.
4. I understand that students will only be released from the program to those listed on the Enrollment Form. I understand that the person(s) authorized on the Enrollment Form must be at least 18 years of age and possess valid picture identification.
5. I understand that the SFK reserves the right to dismiss any students who do not comply with the center's rules and policies.
6. Should I decide to withdraw my child from the program for any reason, I agree to provide one month paid and written notice to the director, which will include the signature of both the director and parent and the current date.
7. I understand that the regular tuition will be required for Spring Break, Thanksgiving and Winter break should your child not participate in the weekly activities. Fee to be determined .
8. I understand the center is also open on the majority of Anne Arundel Public County school holidays, teacher work days and other days that the Anne Arundel County public schools are closed.
9. I understand that the hours of operation are Monday to Friday 7:30am-5:30pm during the AACPS school year. I understand that all programs associated with the After School Program end promptly at 5:30pm at which time all students must be picked up. I understand that I will be charged a late fee of \$5 per minute if I am late picking up my child. Please remember to sign your child out each day and let us know in advance if someone else is going to pick up your child.

10. I understand that credit/refund will not be given for absences, illness or non-school days as SFK must make employment commitments to employees. Please notify us as soon as you know your child will not be attending, whether they're sick or on vacation.

11. If the class is closed for 10-14 days due to COVID, or if the building is closed for a short time, tuition is still due. If the State deems it necessary for all Child care facilities to close, you will not be beyond the end of the month.

Parent Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Arrival and Departure Procedure

### ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Maryland state law requires families to **always** sign their child/children into SmartFit Kids. We ask the parents and child/children to please use a mask while signing your child/children in. An adult must walk their child/children to the front of the building, a child/children will not be permitted without adult supervision. Upon arrival, parents need to take their child/children's temperature and verify it with a SmartFit Kids staff member. The staff member will record their temperature and the staff will ask you COVID-19 daily health questions, we ask you to please be honest with your information when asking you these questions. We want to keep the staff, children and families safe and healthy.

Students enrolled in the eLearning program must be dropped off between 7:30am and 8:30am. **PLEASE BE PROMPT!** Students need to be settled in before starting their online class. Students enrolled in the Morning Program (during normal operation where school is in person) are to be dropped off between 6:30am and 7:30am.

Students enrolled in the Afternoon Program (during normal operation where school is in person) will arrive at SmartFit Kids following school dismissal. The staff will be required to sign-in the children during pick-up from the school and then brought back to SmartFit kids until their parents arrive.

### DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

Maryland state law requires a child/children to be signed out before they are released to the parents or an authorized pick-up person on the sign- in/out sheet. If someone is picking up your child/children from your emergency form they must have a valid id and it will be checked against the emergency form and a copy of the license will be put into their folder. If you have some picking

up that is not on the emergency form a written note/email must be provided before the release of the child. In a server emergency we will allow phone calls for authorization pick-up. They must have a valid id and a copy will be put into the child folder.

Students enrolled in the eLearning program are to be picked up after school, depending on any club or Taekwondo participation. After-School clubs run from 3-4 pm during our eLearning Program, and Taekwondo is from 4-5pm.

## Attendance

### **MORNING ATTENDANCE:**

- During the morning program, it is necessary to contact the center staff on a daily basis to report if they are not attending the program.

### **AFTERNOON ATTENDANCE:**

- During the afternoon program, knowledge of your child/children's attendance is crucial.
- Please assist us by informing the center staff of the occasions that your child/children will not be attending their regular afternoon program. You may leave a voicemail at the center phone number (the center staff checks voicemail when they arrive each day to prepare for the afternoon program). Please do not rely upon a note to your child's teacher to inform the child care staff of an afternoon absence. Due to the fact that the child care programs operate as a separate entity within the school building, the note may never reach our staff.
- Please also be aware that the center staff must follow the dismissal procedures their individual school has in place.
- If a child/children does not report to SmartFit Kids, all attempts will be made through the school office to see if the child/children attended school that day, was dismissed early, or is attending another after school activity.

## Absences

Please inform us, if your child/children is to be absent, leaving school early, or will be attending an after-school activity. Use our mailbox in the school office or leave us a message on

our answering machine. The Center Director at each location is responsible for maintaining an accurate attendance record for the child/children per MSDE-OCC regulations mandate that child/children who are absent from the program due to illness for three (3) days or more must have a written statement from a parent or physician that the child may return to a regular schedule. A copy of the note sent to the school is sufficient.

The Smart Fit Kids telephone numbers are:

410-777-9398 (Office)

443-597-7173 (Director)

## **Custody Cases**

### **Confidentiality of Student Records**

Your child/children records are open only to your child/children teacher, the Director, the Owner, and authorized employees of Maryland's State Licensing Agency.

### **Authorized Release of Child**

The Center will only release a child/children to a parent, legal guardian, or an individual authorized by the parent and/or legal guardian listed on the emergency information card. Staff members reserve the right to ask for identification from any person trying to pick up a child from the Center. If an individual is listed on the emergency card, and produces proper identification, the child may be released from the center without a confirmation call to the parent.

The Center does not make it a practice to accept authorized pick up changes over the phone, except in emergencies. Under these circumstances, a return confirmation call from a staff person to the parent may be necessary.

As a parent, you must submit in writing the new authorized persons information (name, address, telephone number) to be added to the list. In cases in which an authorized pick up person is to be deleted, please contact the Center Director.

## **Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents**

Unless a specified custody agreement, signed by a judge and on file in the center, the non-custodial parents will have the right to information about their child/children. This means that non-custodial parents will be informed of all school activities, classroom concerns, and information about their child/children. This practice is beneficial to child/children in order to help them feel that both parents are taking an active role in their childcare experience.

## **Testifying in Court**

If you request an employee of SmartFit Kids to appear in court or testify for the purpose of a child custody hearing, a service charge of \$150.00 per 4 hours will be required. The charge is per staff member needed and must be paid in full at least 10 days prior to each court date.

## **Daily Schedule**

The daily schedule for the children is a guide. It provides a framework for planning and organizing the daily routine and play activities for the children. The daily routines for children may be a little different based on the age of your child. Please talk to your child/children Teacher, Assistant Director or Director in maintaining a hard copy or an emailed copy of your child/children schedule.

## **Lunch and Snack**

Parents will provide lunch, snacks and drinks for their child/children. Due to unknown allergies NO SNACK is provided by the school.

In time, SmartFit Kids will ask parents to donate healthy nutritional snacks for the school. The Director will give the parents a list of what they can buy that follow MSDE requirements.

# Nut Free Policy

SmartFit Kids has a number of children with confirmed or suspected allergies to peanuts and or tree nuts. To keep our school safe and fun for all our students, SmartFit Kids has adopted a nut-free policy. This includes products processed in facilities that contain peanuts and or tree nuts. **Please read all food labels carefully!**

# Birthday Celebrations

Parents are welcome to celebrate their child's birthday at school. Should you choose this option we ask you speak to the Director prior to bringing something in to make sure it is appropriate for the students to have. **Please read all food labels carefully!** Instead of cake or cupcakes, we ask that you bring in muffins, cookies or fruit that can be shared among the students.

# Nap Time

**This is for the Pre-K program only!** We make every effort to have the children take a daily nap for an hour to two hours. After at least 45 minutes of quiet rest, children who are still awake may do something quietly with the teacher such as an activity or a book.

Parents may provide the child/children with a stuffed animal for naptime. We ask parents to send in a fitted sheet for the cot and a blanket. **Please label all their bedding materials!** Children's naptime items will be sent home on Friday for weekend cleaning.

# Parent Concerns

As a childcare center we are a community of children, parents and staff all interacting and sharing



our lives together. In a community, people work closely together and hopefully interactions are positive, helpful and kind and understanding. Yet it is to be expected that from time to time people will experience some conflict, some concerns and some difficulties.

We recognize that parenting is one of the most difficult, intense and rewarding experiences in your life. We want you to share your thoughts, hopes and dreams for your child/children. You want what is best for your child/ children and we know it is your job to advocate and protect your child/children.

We as a staff will make mistakes; create misunderstandings and occasionally have miscommunications. When these mistakes occur, we want you to tell us. As a staff it is our goal to offer your family the best in child care services possible. In order to meet our goal, we need your input, your suggestions and your concerns.

When you have a concern, please remember.....

- Teachers want the parents to feel very satisfied with the care their child is receiving
- Talk to the teachers directly whenever possible. If you feel comfortable, ask your child's teacher first about any concerns. Teachers prefer that you talk to them directly, but they understand if you would prefer to talk with the Assistant Director or Director
- Realize that if you have a concern with a teacher the Assistant Director or Director will need to investigate and talk with the teacher directly about your concern and deal with the issue in a straightforward manner so that the teacher can improve her/his performance and correct any mistakes or misunderstandings.
- Be assured that teachers **DO NOT** hold a grudge against your child or "take it out" on your child after you have expressed a concern. We would not hire anyone at our center that would react in such an inappropriate manner. Actually, after expressing a concern, your child's teacher will be more conscientious about your issues and try to improve
- Consider using the "once is OK" rule. With minor issues, allow staff to make a mistake once or twice but when it becomes a pattern, it is definitely a time to bring it to their attention of the Assistant Director or Director
- On the other hand, don't allow concerns to build up. As concerns occur, share them with the teachers. It is disturbing to find out "later" that a parent had a number of concerns and never expressed them
- Sometimes we cannot make changes you may request due to other restrictions but we **ALWAYS** want to hear your suggestions. We promise to consider them seriously and respond to you in a timely manner

## Primary Caregiver

Continuity of care is a high-quality practice of having teachers and children stay together for the school year. Because learning occurs simultaneously with emotional attachment, it is best for children to have a stable caregiver throughout their year. We strive for continuity of care, which

loops through our program.

All the children in our program will have a Primary Caregiver/Teacher. The primary caregiver system ensures that every child has a “special person.” **The Assistant Director and Director is the primary contact when talking with the parents about their child/children.**

## SmartFit Kids Staff

All staff at SmartFit Kids, are accredited through the state of Maryland. All lead teachers have a B.A, A.S or teaching credentials; Assistant teachers have a A.S degree or teaching credentials. All teachers must also undergo a background check and CPR training. We believe that teachers are the backbone of the school and we strive to employ only the best.

## Safety

The first teacher on duty in the morning will make a visual inspection of the room and correct potential hazards. Staff will use good judgment and prevention techniques to avoid injuries, burns, poisonings, choking, suffocation, traffic or pedestrian accidents.

In the event of a community emergency/ tornado and SmartFit Kids is deemed unsafe for habitation SmartFit Kids students are assigned to 2 nearby facilities

- The Severna Park Bowling Alley

## Fire Procedures

- Monthly fire drills will be conducted; a log if kept
- Primary exits of the building are out the side and or front doors
- 911 will be called if needed
- Fire extinguishers are in each classroom
- All staff is trained in fire procedures at staff orientation

## Accident of Emergency Procedures

If your child becomes injured at the center, the teacher or Director in charge will administer simple first aid, such as washing the injury, applying ice, and bandages. The teacher will then fill out an accident report. If the child receives a serious injury that requires medical services, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Call the parent or guardian
2. Call at least one of the persons listed on the emergency form
3. Call the child's physician for his or her advice
4. In case that the above three fail, we will call an ambulance or paramedic team and have the child taken to the emergency room. A staff person will go in the ambulance with the child

## **Attendance and Health Policies**

Our center is cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis to help control germs, bacteria and the spread of COVID-19. For the health and well being of your child/children and the others at the school, please keep your child/children home for the following reasons:

- Fatigue (for any reason)
- A fever of 100.5 F (a child should remain at home for 24 hours after the fever is gone)
- Prescribed medication needs to be administered for 24 hours before a child returns. SmartFit Kids cannot administer any medication without written Physician's note
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea (a child should remain at home 24 hours after the last episode)
- Red, "crusty", itchy eyes. Conjunctivitis or "pink eye" is a very contagious (A child should remain at home for 24 hours while being treated with antibiotics and should only return to school if there is no discharge from the eyes)
- A runny nose, if there is a colored nasal discharge
- Contagious skin rashes
- Head lice (a child can return when there are no lice or nits) If the a child returns from the 24 away period with lice eggs still in there hair a note from a professional lice removal company will be require or by a physician

## **Health Related Issues and Practices**

Group care poses many different and new situations that children are exposed to on a daily basis. One thing they are typically exposed to is different types of illness. As a general center policy, we do not refuse mildly ill children. Children may have a cough on snuffle and still attend our center but because of the exposure of COVID-19, the child/children could be placed in the isolation room to keep away from other children in the center. The child/children will be watched for any other symptoms and we may ask the parent/guardian to come and get their child/children.

Please refer to the Parent Handbook for more center related policies concerning Health and Safety. It is common for children to get sick in a group care setting.

## **Healthy Practices**

### **Hand Washing**

At SmartFit Kids we are firm in the belief of healthy practices. Hand washing is one of the best ways to cut down transmission of germs. Teachers in the classroom follow proper hand washing techniques throughout the day-including but not limited to: arriving at the center, before and after eating, after bathroom, after wiping noses, coughing, after outdoor activities, upon entering the classroom. Children as well engage in many hand washings throughout the day. This helps to stop the spread of germs.

### **General Disinfecting**

Toys that have been in contact with different children are disinfected everyday throughout the day. Teachers will often place a toy into a container after a child has dropped it to be cleaned in the next batch of toys. At the end of the day, other equipment and materials will be cleaned as well. The bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day. A sanitizing solution of bleach water is used for general disinfecting. The school is sanitized with a special solution at the end of each school day. All food must be taken home every evening for cleaning and replacement. Leftover food will be discarded nightly.

### **Fresh Air / Outdoor Play**

Classrooms are aired frequently. The children play outdoors daily, weather permitting. Fresh air in the colder months does not cause or promote illness. It actually facilitates good health. Cold air is not related to making a child sick. If a child is in attendance during outdoor time, he/she is healthy enough to then go outside with the rest of the children. All children in attendance during their classroom's outdoor play will go outside. Please do not ask your child to stay inside during outside time.

Parents may not make a request for their child/children to stay inside while the rest of the group is outside. If these requests were granted, there would be serious staffing issues. Granting these requests is not feasible, not practical and not fair to the other families and children.

Programs are expected to include outdoor experiences in their daily activities during all seasons. Children benefit from fresh air by breathing air that has fewer germs. Outdoor exercise will increase their general fitness and resistances to infection. Cold and flu are more common during the winter months because they spread easily when people spend more time in closed, heated and stuffy rooms. Breathing warm, dry indoor air irritates the tissues in the nose and throat making it easier to catch a cold. We ask that your child/children are dressed in appropriate clothing to go outside.

Therefore, outdoor is considered healthy practice in a quality childcare program.

# Pre-K Sleeping Materials

The bedding on the cot is washed every week. When illnesses are prevalent laundering happens every 2 days. We asked that the stuffed animals / pillows are also cleaned also every week.

## Immunizations/Fever Reducers

All children entering group care should be immunized against disease at appropriate ages, as recommended by Maryland state licensing standards, child/children must have a medical exam, lead test, and the appropriate shots before entering the center. Immunizations happen on a regular basis during the first year of life. It is understandable that there are sometimes side-effects resulting from these, a couple being in pain, rash/hives, or to a mild fever. If a doctor's note is provided we can add to their file in case there is something that they are allergic to from the immunizations shots.

## Medication / Other Products

### Sunscreen

At SmartFit Kids we ask the families to bring in sunscreen for child/children. If a parent wishes to have these products administered to their child/children, please fill out the sunscreen form. Sunscreen should be purchased with a high level of blockage. We ask that parents do not bring in old sunscreen from last year. These products break down and their effectiveness seriously deteriorates. Newly purchased sunscreen is the safest and most effective.

### Over the Counter Medications

Should your child/children need a non-prescription medication, parents or staff will be able to administer this with a specific note from the doctor including the dosages, for how long of period is this for (cannot be indefinite), how much medications should be administered, and what is the medication specifically for. Please understand that the staff cannot administer any over the counter medications at the center unless it is accompanied by a current doctor's note. Only the staff that has gone through the Medication class can distribute the medication to your child.

### Prescription Medications

We will be able to administer a prescription medication to your child after you have given the first dose and it comes to us in its original container with the prescription label on it. A medication permission form must be filled out by the doctor. Only the staff who went through the Medication class can distribute the medication to your child.

# Health Related Illness

## Common Early Childhood Illness

The following is a brief description of some very common illnesses that can occur in younger children. The illness is not exclusive to just SmartFit Kids- they are everywhere. If you need more information on these illnesses SmartFit Kids will print out all the information and give it to the parents/guardian.

### **Croup:**

Refers to an infection of the upper airway, which obstructs breathing and causes a characteristic barking cough. The cough and other signs and symptoms of **croup** are the result of swelling around the voice box (larynx), windpipe (trachea) and bronchial tubes (bronchi)

### **Fifth's Disease:**

It is a viral **disease** that often results in a red rash on the arms, legs, and cheeks. For this reason, it's also known as "slapped cheek **disease**." It's fairly common and mild in most children. It can be more severe for pregnant women or anyone with a compromised immune system.

### **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease:**

A common children's virus causing sores in the mouth and a rash on the hands and feet. The condition is spread by direct contact with someone's saliva or mucus.

### **Respiratory Syncytial Virus:**

**RSV**, is a common **respiratory virus** that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but **RSV** can be serious, especially for infants and older adults.

### **Thrush:**

Is a medical condition in which a yeast-like fungus called **Candida albicans** overgrows in the mouth and throat. **Thrush** may be triggered to occur by a variety of factors, including illness, pregnancy, medications, smoking, or dentures.

### **Roseola:**

Is a viral illness that most commonly affects young kids between 6 months and 2 years old. It's also known as sixth disease, exanthem subitum, and **roseola** infantum. It is usually marked by several days of high fever, followed by a distinctive rash just as the fever breaks.

# Inclusion Policy

When a child with **disabilities and or special needs** requires emergency medical care, restricted activity, specialized equipment or procedures, additional supervision , or modifications is admitted to Smart Fit Academy, a medical emergency plan form or child care plan form is required. This form must be prepared and signed by the child's parents and the child's health or special education professional in compliance with Maryland State regulations.

Staff at Smart Fit Academy work closely with the special education team to ensure the IEP and IFSP accommodations and modifications are met to the best of our ability.

If a child with special needs requires additional qualified staff or equipment in order to meet their needs for the programs and services, additional fees may be charged.

## Procedure

Early identification of a child's individual needs are made either by the staff of the early childhood center or from information received from parents or external sources such as, Family Services, Child Development Psychologists, Family Doctors or from another Daycare Center upon enrollment.

Observations and record keeping is carried out in conjunction with parents and enables the child's needs and the progress to be monitored on an individual basis.

Children with exceptional needs will have an individualized education plan created by the Smartfit Kids Teachers with the help of Parents and the Doctor. The teacher will keep an individualized notebook that will be kept locked up for the individual child to keep documentations to be able to help the student in the classroom.

Progress reports are read by all daycare staff to promote individual need awareness. Smartfit Kids recognizes that in order to provide a fully inclusive and supportive environment, collaboration with support services and external agencies is essential. Agencies can be called upon when support is identified for a specific need to support a specific child.

Examples of this supports might include:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Educational Psychologist
- Behavioral Support Services
- Health Visitors
- Hearing Specialist
- Visual Specialist
- Child Development Clinic
- Physiotherapy
- Other Specialist Needed

Smartfit Kids works closely with the parents to involve them in all decisions related to their child's education. Meetings are scheduled every 6 months to consult with parents, specialists and daycare team members to go over the children's skills, goals and services required for the upcoming term. Goals and objectives are identified and expectations for the child's participation in that environment are established. The teacher, parents and or specialists will create adaptations and accommodations that address those individual needs.

The teacher will provide learning targets, individuals goals, resources and learning to support the indicated goals in order to maximize their achievements and progress. Smartfit Kids will incorporate these on a daily basis through activities such as snack preparations, arts and crafts, social interactions in circle activities, physical activities and in equipment set out in the play areas.

Smartfit Kids teachers have a personal embrace of the principles of diversity and inclusion. They are accepting, respectful and welcoming to all people. We strive to promote positive relationships and interactions with staff, families and children based on respect, trust and fairness. The teachers value and nurture all areas of a child's development-social, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and physical.

Smartfit Kids works on establishing and maintaining healthy environments which meet the requirements of the state and program policies, utilizing knowledge of inclusive practices and special needs to ensure safe programming for all children. Any accommodations to the physical building and equipment are adequate to meet the child's needs; toys, building and playgroup facilities, learning materials and devices for the children.

## **Challenging Behaviors**

As a parent we know how hard it can be while dealing with challenging behaviors. At SmartFit Kids



we know that not all children are the same and some children have different strategies when dealing with behaviors, as a center we strive to help the children grow and work on the problems head on with redirection and support from their teachers. Under no circumstances will corporal punishment of any kind be used at SmartFit Kids. Nor will an adult voice ever be raised in anger at any child.

It is the policy of SmartFit Kids to focus on positive guidance. Positive guidance is the practice of looking at each situation through the eyes of children. As teacher's we want to be able to help the children develop positive guidance and guide the children's behavior. This practice reframes the situation, so we move beyond a reaction and towards a more effective response.

Rather than using punishment that is punitive and harsh, positive guidance considers children's developmental needs, these are associated with, but not identical to age because each child develops differently.

### **This approach include considering developmental needs and**

1. Offering opportunities to explore and learn
2. Establishing routines and roles that help the children know what to expect
3. Setting clear boundaries and limits
4. Offering choices throughout the day
  - a. As seen on our daily schedule, children are offered opportunities throughout the day to pick and choose the center/area they would like to go too.
  - b. During small group and free play children are encouraged to explore the different centers such as..
    - i. Dramatic play
    - ii. Literacy Center
    - iii. Writing Center
    - iv. Stem Area/Science Center
    - v. Block Center
    - vi. Math Center
    - vii. Art Center
    - viii. Library Center
    - ix. Fine Motor Area
    - x. Gross Motor Area

5. Being proactive in knowing how to prevent stress or anxiety- such as transitions, from daily drop-off and pick-up, to changing teachers or classes
6. Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child
7. Facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes or disagreements
8. Redirecting behavior when this seem ineffective
  - a. A calming corner to cool down and decompress before returning back to the group
  - b. Verbal Directions: The teacher gives a simple directions that can help the challenging situation or behavior to help the children to make better decisions
  - c. Physical Directions: The teacher gives simple directions and gentle touches that can help guide the behavior
  - d. Visual: The teacher can use pictures or gestures to show ways to prevent the behavior, use visual aids to show transitions, schedules, feelings and other appropriate pictures to help define the behavior or to help the student.
    - i. Examples: Tucker the Turtle (Book and Puppets), Feelings chart and visual classroom schedule
  - e. Acting out: Using actions to draw examples by putting on shows or using puppets to show appropriate behaviors and how to calm down
9. Taking a one minute break to calm down
10. Counseling children individually about their behaviors and figuring out ways to help them
11. Talking with the parent/guardian and coming up with a solution to better help their child/children during these time

Remember to talk first because the child could be going through a personal turmoil that could be causing these behaviors. These behaviors can impact the child/children in their group.

**The following behaviors children can have in a group setting are:**

- Child wants constant attention from the staff which can cause disruptive behavior
- Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self
- Disrespects people and materials provided in the program
- Consistently disobeys the rules of the center
- Verbally threatens other students and/or staff
- Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the group of children.

**Discipline Procedures for disruptive behavior are as followed:**

- Disruptive Behavior will be addressed in an incident report. The teacher will write down and document any inappropriate behaviors that directly impact other children, staff members, or the group as a whole. This report will be shared with the parent and will explain the behavior and how the behavior has affected others. It will also explain how the situation was resolved. The incident report will be placed in the child's folder to be taken home, signed, and returned the next day to the teacher.

- If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the center Director.
- If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the child to be sent home for a time to be determined, or removed from the program altogether.

## Other Important Information

### Smoking Policy

**Smart Fit Kids** is a SMOKE – FREE property. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the premises. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

### Toys and Electronics

Children are not permitted to bring toys, games, collectible cards, electronics, CDs, CD players, Game Boys, Tablets, iPods, MP3 Players, etc. from home to the center. The Child Care program is not responsible for money, cell phones or other personal items your child may bring to the program. Children may not use, activate or display their cell phone during child care hours unless approved by the Center's Director.

### Field Trips

SmartFit Kids will have the opportunity to attend field trips when there is NO COVID-19. There will be a field trip permission form that must be signed and returned to the teacher prior to the field trip taking place. During these challenging times because of COVID-19, field trips are a lot different than they used to be but we will look for activities that can be done outside. When going on field trips the ratios must be maintained at all times, so please turn in your forms as soon as possible.

## Personal Property

Personal property such as coats, clothing, school bags, etc. must be taken home from their classroom at the end of the school day. If anything is left over night the next day the teacher opening in the morning will place all items in the lost and found. After a month of it being in lost and

found it will be donated to Goodwill or to anyone in need of those materials. We try to allow the children to be independent and take care of their stuff with helpful reminders from their teacher. The teacher will help the children to stay organized but the program will not be responsible for any lost property. We ask that children do not bring in any money, toys, video games or other material from home unless they are needed for a school project please talk to the Assistant Director or Director about these materials being brought in.

## **Visitors**

We welcome parents and community members to visit our program to get an understanding of what goes on at SmartFit Kids. For liability reasons we ask that no children take part in the activities. During COVID-19 our process has changed. We allow zoom calls to talk with the Director or invite you to come visit after school or on the weekends. We do not want to expose any children or families right now while we are constantly dealing with this pandemic.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are welcome and are a valuable asset to the program. They may include adults in college, a work study program, service hours and so forth. The volunteers must sign an agreement to follow specific guidelines before being allowed into the center to help out with the program or your children. The volunteer must go through a background check and training before volunteering. If there are any problems, the volunteer will be asked to leave. We take the safety of our children seriously and we will not allow anyone to harm, disrespect, or being mean to anyone in our center.

## **Delayed Opening and Closings**

### **School Closings**

SmartFit Kids will **NOT** follow the Anne Arundel County Public School calendar. SFK will continue to operate when schools are closed for holidays, breaks, teacher workdays, and teacher conference days. In the event schools are closed due to poor weather conditions, utility problems, or any federal, state, or local emergencies, there will be before or after school care. If after - school or evening activities are cancelled, **SFK WILL CLOSE** at normal hours.

### **Delayed Openings or Early Dismissals**

- 2 hour delayed opening: SFK will open at normal hours
- Scheduled early dismissal: SFK will operate from the close of school until 6:00 PM at no extra cost.
- There is no extra charge for delayed openings or scheduled early dismissals if your child is enrolled to the before **AND** after school program. If your child attends the afternoon program only and you need care due to a delayed opening, there is a fee of \$35 for morning care. If your child attends the morning program only and you need care due to an unplanned or scheduled early dismissal, there is a fee of \$35 for afternoon care.

## **Inclement Weather**

In the event of a snow storm/ blizzard or severe storms that could impact the school, SmartFit Kids will follow the federal offices policy for closing during inclement weather - please check [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov) for updates. If the federal offices are closed, Smart Fit Kids will be closed. **Smart Fit Kids will announce any such closures via email/Facebook.** If weather becomes inclement toward the end of the school day, Smart Fit Kids may decide to close the program early based on local weather predictions and recommendations of the School and/or City Administration. The directors will ensure all families are contacted and asked to pick students up as soon as possible. If the Federal offices are open, Smart Fit Kids will open as soon as the parking lot and sidewalks are cleared and safely accessible.

**Thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook, we appreciate your time and we look forward to serving you and your children the best way possible. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Assistant Director or Director.**

## **SCREEN TIME POLICY**

**"A child in attendance who is: younger than 2 years old may not be permitted to view any passive technology; and 2 years old or older may not be permitted to view more than 30 minutes of age-appropriate, educational passive technology per week. Md. Code Regs."**

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Director Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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