



General Information & Operating Policy

Effective: September 1, 2010

Goals and Objectives

The members of your Leadership Team have been carefully trained and selected to provide for the needs of your family, with regard to child care. While each has unique, complimentary professional and personal skills that they successfully use for the benefit of children at Shepherd's Promise, together they represent the embodiment of synergy and focus targeted to make Shepherd's Promise the perfect place for your child. Working actively in the day to day operation of the center, our staff is absolutely committed to ensuring that your child has the highest standard and quality of care available anywhere.

Day Care Hours

Our hours of operation are 6:00 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We will always have the door open for you by 6:00 A.M., and we require that you make arrangements to pick up your child *before* 6:30 P.M.

Learning

Decades of credible research have proven beyond the shadow of doubt that young children learn best through play. For that reason, children must be allowed to play in order to grow and develop naturally. Play activities are designed to challenge your child in all three areas of development: physical development (eye-hand, muscle control, balance), emotional development (relationships with others, communication, self esteem), and cognitive development (brain development, how information is processed).

Activities include moving and singing with music; listening to, reading, and telling stories; sorting, building, and working with manipulative toys; reasoning, making decisions and choices; pretending and play acting; playing organized and individual games; settling disputes; naming, matching, and drawing shapes; recognizing and painting with colors; recognizing, sounding and writing letters; and counting, recognizing and writing numbers.

We use a number of well known curriculum tools within the framework of our own curriculum, Learn-At-Play®. The best known of these are "Handwriting Without Tears®" and "Frog Street Press®." For more information on how these programs help get your children ready for Kindergarten and beyond, please see a member of your Leadership Team.

Fees

When you make your decision to join us, you will pay

- an *enrollment fee* of \$80 per family,
- a *supplies fee** of \$50 per child or \$75 per family, and
- an *initial deposit* equal to the first week of care.

Payment of the enrollment fee, supplies fee and initial deposit secure your child's place at Shepherd's Promise. When your child starts, the initial deposit will cover the first week of care.

*Regarding the *supplies fee*—the full fee is due for the *current year* if you secure your child's spot from the 15th of August until April 30th. From May 1st until August 14th, the *current year's* fee will be reduced by half. The supplies fee for the upcoming year is due on July 1st, and late if paid after August 15th.

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Please note: By accepting your money, we are agreeing to make certain that your child's spot is available. Our commitment is to prepare and process everything necessary from an administrative standpoint and even to decline other families who desire immediate care in order to keep your child's spot available, once you've paid the enrollment fee and initial deposit. For that reason, **all fees and your initial deposit are non-refundable.** Please be certain that this is the place for you *before* paying your money!

Current Fees are:

6 wks. to 9 mos.	\$178
9 mos. to 18 mos.	\$160
18 mos. to 2 1/2 yrs.	\$153
2 yrs. to 3 yrs.	\$150
3K	\$145
4K & up	\$140

There is a \$10 discount for each of your child's siblings. Daily rates are usually not available.

All fees must be paid on *Friday, before the week that we provide care.*

- € Tuition paid Friday before the week of service is on time.
- € Tuition paid before close of business on Monday is late.
- € Tuition paid on Tuesday must include the late fee of \$20.
- € No service will be provided if tuition and late fee remains unpaid after Tuesday.

Returned check fee - \$35

Late pick up fee - One dollar per minute, per child.

Any late pick up payments must be made on Friday of the week in which the fee is charged and combined with the upcoming week's fee.

Late payment fee - \$20

If payment has not been made by the close of business on Monday of the week of care, a \$20 late fee will be added to your outstanding balance. Please do not put us in the awkward position of refusing to admit your child on Wednesday if both weekly fee and late payment fee have not been made.

To ensure our ability to meet your standards of excellence, we evaluate our fee structure, periodically adjusting for inflation and other factors. Generally, any fee changes will be disclosed in April for implementation in June.

Holidays

Shepherd's Promise will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (2 Days)
- Christmas (2 Days)
- New Year's Day

**Please see
your Director
for this calendar
year's specific Dates!**

Absences

When your child is absent, our expenses in providing excellent care continue, our payroll continues and our commitment to reserve and protect your child's place at Shepherd's Promise remains. For that reason, tuition must be paid even in your child's absence. This includes absence for illness or injury.

Vacation

For one week per year, our families are encouraged to enjoy a week of vacation together. For this vacation week while your child is absent, tuition is waived. In order for your tuition to be waived for this week while your child is on vacation, you must:

- 🍎 Complete a “Vacation Request Form” and
- 🍎 Submit it to us 30 days before your planned vacation so we may staff and budget accordingly.

Snow Days/ Severe Weather

Please listen to your radio or watch Fox 6 for *Shelby County public school closings* during adverse weather situations. In an effort to protect your children we will close in conjunction with Shelby County Public Schools. In the event of adverse weather when school is out, we will contact you regarding center closures.

Special Care Instructions and Information

We will do everything possible to make your child’s time with us educational, developmental and FUN! Whenever possible and practical, we will honor any “special instructions” you have for us regarding your child. **Please provide such instructions in writing.** Information about interests, fears and habits is helpful, and information about food allergies and such is essential!

If your child is going home with someone other than a parent, please let us know. This person ***must*** be listed on the Preadmission form as a person the child may be released to. This person should bring a picture ID. We care for your children. ***We will only release them to someone who is duly authorized.***

When Your Child is Sick

If your child is sick, *please don’t place other children at risk by bringing him or her to Shepherd’s Promise!* We are not equipped for “quarantining” and caring for sick children beyond the time it takes you to get here to pick them up. If your child becomes ill while in our care, we will call you to pick him or her up. Please make arrangements to do so immediately. In all cases, we expect for your child to be picked up within one hour.

Please make sure we know where and how to reach you every day.

When your child is absent—even due to sickness or injury—our expenses in providing excellent care continue and our commitment to reserve your child’s place at Shepherd’s Promise remains. For that reason, tuition must be paid even in your child’s absence.

- 🍎 If your child is too sick to go outside, she is too sick to be in the center.
- 🍎 Any child who runs a fever of 100° or higher, vomits, has diarrhea or other signs of illness may not remain in the center.
- 🍎 For illnesses requiring a visit to your doctor, please bring a note from him indicating that your child may return to the center.
- 🍎 If placed on antibiotics, your child must take them for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- 🍎 Your child must be symptom and fever free—without Tylenol or other meds—for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school! You’ll thank us for enforcing this when other children are kept from making yours ill!

Medication Policy

With the strict DHR regulations on administering medications, many child care centers are simply refusing to administer any medications. Because we want to meet the needs of your child in the best way possible, we will administer medications on a limited basis. Please help us comply with these regulations.

1. All medication—prescription and over the counter—***must*** be accompanied by a completed and signed DHR form called an “Authorization for Administering Medication.”
2. Any medications given “in” the body must be prescribed by a doctor. This includes prescription meds as well as over the counter meds like Tylenol. Please DO NOT ask us to administer ANY drugs—including over the counter drugs—without the required note from your doctor!
3. The authorization form must give specific directions that exactly match your doctor’s prescription. For our purposes, “as needed” is unacceptable.

4. All medications brought into the center **must be placed directly into the hands of the Director, Assistant Director, or Director on Duty** along with the completed authorization for administering medication form. **NO ONE else is authorized to receive medication, prescription or OTC.**
5. Medication will be given between 12:00 and 1:00 PM, only. If you inform your pediatrician of this requirement, he can work with you on the dosing so that this can be accomplished with little difficulty. There are a few exceptions to this, such as breathing treatments, asthma meds and reflux meds, and **all exceptions must be approved by the Director.**
6. DHR requires a new "Authorization for Administering Medication" form *each week*. This form must be an original with an original signature.
7. The Director, Assistant Director or Director on Duty will administer *all* oral medications, whenever practical. Classroom teachers will administer topical medications.
8. All medications must stay in a locked and secure place. **Please do not leave ANY medication in your diaper bag (yes... this means diaper cream, sunscreen or gas drops)!** This is a DHR requirement!
9. "Authorization for Administering Medication" forms are available in the office and online.

Potty Training

When your child is ready to "potty-train", we will work diligently with you to help him accomplish that goal. Please keep in mind that children do not get ready to potty train at any predetermined age. While we are interested in assisting you in this area, the health and safety of all the children present is of critical importance. For that reason, we require that all children wear *pull-ups* until we all agree that "*big kid underwear*" should be worn. Sometimes children "relapse" after having been successful at toileting. These setbacks are always temporary, but may necessitate your child going back to pull-ups for a time. Please keep in mind that this is required for the health and safety of all children in the room.

Nutritionally Balanced Meals

We provide meals for your children. These meals include morning snack (2 food groups), a hot lunch (5 food groups), and afternoon snack (2 food groups). Please see the posted menu and scheduled serving times for children over 12 months old. Our meal program is nutritionally balanced and we're proud of the quality of food we serve. With the percentage of overweight and obese kids reaching epidemic proportions, you should know that we're "down on sugar", and we actively seek healthy substitutes for sugary and fatty snacks.

If your child has special diet instructions (allergies), please let us know in writing.

Meals, formula, and snacks for infants 12 months and under will be provided by the parent. DHR requires that feeding schedule for your child "shall be in accordance with each infant's/toddler's needs rather than according to the hour."

Family Involvement

We enjoy celebrating birthdays. If you would like to bring a special snack to celebrate your child's birthday, please notify your child's teacher. Parents are encouraged to attend birthday snack time.

Mothers are encouraged to attend "Muffins for Moms" on the Friday preceding Mother's Day.

Dads are encouraged to attend "Donuts for Dads" on the Friday preceding Father's Day.

Grandparents are encouraged to attend "Goodies for Grandparents" on the Friday preceding Grandparent's Day

We also plan a "Family Fun Night" or "Fall Festival."

Discipline

Two of the most important developmental principles that your child can learn during his formative years are connected to behavior. The first is that only certain behavior is acceptable, and the second is the he is responsible for his behavior. Be encouraged! We've helped thousands of families go through this process. While we insist that his behavior be acceptable and appropriate for his age, we've been very successful in helping children learn exactly what 'acceptable behavior' is. We use ONLY positive techniques of behavior modification and we will never spank your child or use any other form of corporal punishment on her. Children are encouraged to gain self-control and to handle conflicts in a peaceful, effective manner. Methods of positive guidance include redirection, providing alternative activities and praising appropriate behavior.

We use "time out" as a last resort, but time out for us means allowing your child to sit in a comfortable, snug place while giving her time to gain her composure. We know that every moment is a "teaching" moment. Even during time-out, our purpose is to teach your child how to regain control and composure by doing deep breathing, using her words, talking gently and quietly about what is troubling her, and helping her think of better ways to solve a problem in the future.

Chronic discipline issues, and those outside the boundaries of what is considered "developmentally appropriate" will require careful coordination between you, as the parents, and us. In these instances we are committed to working hand in hand with you to help modify behavior. While we strive to meet the individual and varied needs of the individual, we are also responsible for the group. Occasionally, we are unable to effect needed change in a child's behavior and must discontinue care.

Outside Play

Please dress your child for outside play and other gloriously messy learning and developmental activities! Remember: our curriculum is called "Learn-At-Play" and we love to do exactly that—outside, whenever we can! We don't want to spoil nice clothing or special shoes while we are playing, so be sure and dress your child in clothes that he can play hard in! To be clear, our commitment to outside play is very high! We will go outside each day, unless the weather is extreme. Even then, we will go outside for a limited time, unless there is precipitation falling from the sky.

Child Abuse / Neglect

Our staff is required by law to report known or suspected child abuse, neglect, exploitation or deprivation to local police and / or to the Alabama Department of Human Resources. For the protection of children everywhere, we take this reporting responsibility seriously, and we hope you do too.

Quiet Time

All children will rest on a cot or in a crib for a quiet time during the middle part of the day. All bedding is used by an individual and not shared and will be laundered by us weekly.

Items to Bring

for child's file

- Preadmission Form
- Blue Immunization Card
- Parent Agreement (to abide by policy)

for child's classroom

- Diapers or Pull-ups (if needed)
- Wipes (all ages)*
- Formula - Baby Food - Cereal - Snacks(up to 12 months)
- Bottles with Diaper Bag
- Pacifier (if needed)
- Extra change of clothing appropriate for the season (all ages)
- Hooded Jacket or coat

Please label all items with child's name in permanent marker.

Personal Items from Home

Please dress your children appropriately for active play. We prefer that your child wear sturdy athletic

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shoes. No flip-flops or bare feet, please.

Please provide us with a change of clothing (infants and toddlers need 2 changes) for your child—just “in case.” This includes underwear and socks.

Parents provide diapers, pull-ups and wipes for your child.

We request that children leave toys at home; however, objects of attachment for rest time may be brought, as well as for special “share days.”

Please don't bring toy guns or weapons, money, candy or gum.

Please do not allow your child to enter her classroom while eating or drinking. All the children would like a pop-tart of their own and it's torture for them to watch another child enjoying it when they don't have one, too!

Photographing

We love to capture all of our happy times at Shepherd's Promise with photographs. We use these pictures on our website, in our newsletter and in our advertising. We never publish the children's names with these photos. By enrolling your child, you are giving us permission to photograph your child and use those pictures as described above.

Activity Schedule

We have a wonderful time! Our schedule blends structure and free time in a way that encourages a variety of activities and fun. We are committed to the importance of outside play! Your child may get dirty when playing outside. If you have special plans that require “a clean child”, please bring a change of clothes and come early enough to make sure your child looks the way your special plans require.

Schedule

6:00 - 8:45	Visiting with parents --special instructions; Inside Play (free choice of activities)/Videos
8:45 - 9:15	Morning Snack
9:15 - 10:15	Inside Play/Small group and individual fun learning activities
10:15 - 11:30	Outside Play (run - jump - scream - climb) (weather permitting)
11:30 - 12:00	Inside Activities
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch
12:45 - 3:15	Quiet time
3:15 - 3:45	Snack
3:45 - 4:15	Inside Activities
4:15 - 5:30	Outside Play (daylight and weather permitting)
5:30 - 6:30	Visiting with parents (free choice of activities)

* We will pray before our meals.