

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Small Wonders Nursery School. We are pleased that you and your child have chosen to participate in our infant, toddler, and preschool program.

The Parent Handbook has been designed to help acquaint you with our program. It contains information about our policies and procedures, program operation, and suggestions for parental involvement. Your participation in Small Wonders strengthens our program and contributes to the success of this experience for your child(ren).

Thank you for sharing your child with us. We look forward to working with you as we strive to provide a creative learning environment that will enhance your child’s growth and development.

Sincerely,

Small Wonders Staff

Program Philosophy

In planning an early childhood program, we aim to foster optimal development and the competence to function positively in an ever-changing world. We see optimal development as including the following:

* A feeling of self-worth and self-confidence
* The capacity to trust, respect, and invest emotionally in people
* Effective interpersonal and social independently and develop self-control
* Skill in communicating ideas and feelings
* Acquisition and use of problem-solving skills
* Curiosity about the world and pleasure in learning and exploring

Children are, by nature, playful. They enjoy playing and will do so whenever they can. Challenges intrigue them. We view children as active organizers of experience (rather than passive recipients of instruction) and believe that their primary source of learning is their interaction with the physical and social environment. Children who are engaged in play are actively involved. In play, children voluntarily elaborate and complicate the activity. Adults can provide the appropriate materials and the setting, but only the child can select the best match in which learning is most likely to occur.

Teachers provide a learning environment that challenges without being frustrating and act as facilitators for learning by observing, questioning, modeling, and reinforcing children. Teachers set developmentally appropriate limits on behavior, enforcing them through consistent consequences and encouraging children to use problem-solving skills to resolve conflict.

It looks like play, but children are learning! Each child is an individual, different from every other child, and growing at their rate.

Parents’ support and involvement are important aspects of each child’s development and are essential for the successful operation of our program. Parent participation is encouraged by frequently sharing information about their child(ren) and soliciting ideas concerning program operation and development.

Program Description

Infant: 6 weeks - 9 months

Infant II: 7 months - 13 months

Toddler I: 13 months - 30 months

Toddler II: 24 months - 36 months

Preschool I: 2 ½ years - 3 years

Preschool II: 4 years - 5 years

Please note that the ages for classroom advancements are approximating due to classroom space. Teachers will assess each child’s developmental readiness, which will be evaluated in the next classroom. Each child will make periodic visits to the next classroom over one week before that classroom’s enrollment.

All programs operate 12 months, Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. However, your child may only be in the center for ten hours daily. Only drop-offs after 9:30 a.m. if you have called or messaged Brightwheel to let us know your child is arriving late. You must have a doctor's note if coming past 11:30. Small Wonders Nursery School is fully licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

WHAT TO BRING

Small Wonders provides each child’s resting mat. Please provide the following for your child:

* A fitted crib sheet for the mat and a blanket for cover
* Complete change of clothes with child’s name or initials inside
* Diapers/Pull-ups and wipes, if needed

Child Abuse Prevention, Education, and Reporting Policies:

As Tennessee State law requires, all persons (including doctors, police, teachers, childcare providers, parents, family members, friends, and others) must report suspected child abuse (physical, sexual, or neglect). Failure to do so is a misdemeanor and is subject to stiff penalties. Any suspected child abuse will be reported to the DHS immediately.

An approved, developmentally appropriate program on safe touches and self-esteem is included in the preschool program. Staff members are trained in the content and teaching strategies utilized. The curriculum is a fully integrated part of the program at SWNS, emphasizing fostering positive self-esteem and sharing safe touch in an open, warm, and reassuring atmosphere.

Program Policies

Admission Policy

Small Wonders Nursery School admits children of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the children at the nursery school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or other school-administered programs.

Admission to Small Wonders is based on the date of the application and the school's current needs.

Enrollment Procedures

The director contacts parents from the waiting list to determine interest. A deposit in the amount of the material fee is required. This fee is non-refundable. The annual material fee is due by January 31 of each year.

Parents are asked to complete the following forms for enrollment.

Personal Data: Information about the child’s family and development history.

Emergency Contacts: In case of an accident or an emergency, we must be able to contact you immediately. Please notify us if the information on this form should change.

A physician must complete a certificate of Immunization:

Immunizations must comply with the current Department of Health guidelines.

Your child may only attend Small Wonders if records are present.

Release: If anyone other than a parent or legal guardian is picking up

 a child, we must have prior knowledge, and the third party

 must show ID.

All new enrollments are provisional, subject to the child’s reaction to the classroom to the classroom in the first two weeks. At the end of this period, the director may request the child’s withdrawal if there is no appropriate match between the child's needs and the school’s ability to meet those needs.

Children’s files are considered confidential and are accessible only to teachers and the director. Files are available to the parents upon request and are kept for one year after the child has left our center.

Payment of Fees

Tuition is due every Tuesday, and late fees will be applied the next day, Wednesday. All checks should be made payable to Small Wonders Nursery School. Any returned checks or payments on Brightwheel will be charged a $30.00 late fee. The child will be dropped from enrollment if any account is two weeks delinquent.

Weekly rates are as follows:

Infant: $ 210

Infant II: $ 210

Toddler I: $ 190

Toddler II: $ 180

Preschool I: $180

Preschool II: $170

Part-Time : (2 Days) $110

 (3 Days) $165

Annual Material Fee: $45

A 10% discount is allowed for the oldest child for additional children in the same household. This is only for full-time enrollment.

Please note that rates may increase periodically due to the costs of groceries, supplies, and utilities to continue to operate our facility.

Late Pick-Up

SWNS closes at 6:00 p.m. Parents are asked to pick the children up and leave the building by 6:00 p.m. When you are late picking up your child, you will be asked to sign a form indicating the time you left the building with your child. The late fee must be paid in cash.

The late fee is as follows: 6:01 - 6:10 p.m. $20

 $1.00 per minute after that

Parking

Parents are requested to observe the one-way street arrangements established by Small Wonders. It is intended to keep everyone as safe as possible. Our posted speed limit in the parking lot is 10 mph. Enter the parking lot from Lagoon Drive and exit onto Mariner Point Drive at all times. Please keep your child from running into the building unattended or leaving the building ahead of you at departure. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOUR CHILD” S SAFETY.

Arrival and Departure

Children must be accompanied inside the building and delivered to a teacher. We must only assume responsibility for a child turned over to a teacher and signed in. Please only leave your child at the school after the scheduled opening time.

Your child must be signed in each day upon arrival and signed out at departure.

At departure time, accompany them out of the building. Small Wonders does not assume any responsibility or liability for children's activities with parents on the premises.

Unless we can verify approval (alternate release persons in your child’s file), we will not release your child to anyone other than a parent. Staff will require some form of identification before releasing your child to this individual. This is for the protection of your child and our staff.

NOTE: The staff of Small Wonders reserves the right to refuse the pick-up of any child in their care to an impaired person…whether permission has been granted or not. This impairment can be chemical, emotional, mental, or physical. If your child exhibits fear or anxiety with the person you have designated as a pick-up, you will be notified before your child is released, AND you may be asked to make other arrangements.

Inclement Weather

Small Wonders does not close except in extreme and severe weather conditions. However, parents may also be notified at work if weather conditions worsen during the day and would necessitate an early closing.

Holiday Closings

Small Wonders observes the following holidays and will be closed.

* New Year Day
* Good Friday
* Memorial Day
* July Fourth
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving Day
* Day after Thanksgiving
* Christmas Eve
* Christmas Day

Our policy does not allow for reduced fees for absences or holidays.

It is essential to help children know that people from different places observe different holidays. Still, all celebrations have a similar spirit of thankfulness for who we are and where we live. We always invite parents to share unique holiday traditions and activities as we want to provide a rich and varied experience with holidays and celebrations in our classrooms.

Birthdays

We also enjoy celebrating birthdays at Small Wonders. Parents may bring refreshments, and we will arrange a birthday celebration at snack time.

Family Vacations

Each family with children enrolled full-time is accorded one week of vacation time per year without charge after your child has been registered for three months. Vacations must be taken in a week block Monday through Friday (your child may not attend during this week) and may not be broken down into daily requests. Vacations within holiday closures are acceptable. Your weekly tuition must cover any request for additional time.

Clothing

Clothing for children in our program should be comfortable, washable, and suitable for our daily activities. A complete change of clothes should be kept in your child’s cubby at school. Please bring this on the first day. Since children play outside year-round, please change clothing on a seasonal basis. All clothing should be marked with the child’s name or initials so it can be easily identified. SHOES MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES!

Dispensing of Medication

Small Wonders does not dispense medications unless a doctor prescribes them to treat a CHRONIC illness.

**ILLNESS**

Your child’s health is important to us. Children who are ill should be kept at home. If your child is sick or you will not send them, please call/message us by 9:30 a.m. Your child’s teacher will conduct an informal health check daily. This policy is consistent with the Tennessee Department of Human Services regulations.

**KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME**

* If you have more than one child enrolled at SWNS and one child is sick, the other must stay home until both are cleared to return.
* Tylenol or Motrin SHOULD NOT be administered to reduce a fever of over 101ºF
* Fever is over 100°F axillary (under arm)
* Children with a fever must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning.
* Signs of possible severe illness include unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, etc.
* Change in appearance/behavior (child acts/looks different - unusually tired; lacks appetite; confused; challenging to awaken; change in skin color, eyes, stool, or urine).
* Uncontrolled diarrhea is an increased number of stools compared with a child's typical pattern with increased stool water or decreased form not contained by the diaper or toilet use.
* If your child is sent home with uncontrollable diarrhea, they must be 24 hours free before returning.
* Vomiting in the previous 24-hour period
* Children sent home vomiting must be 24 hours free before returning.
* Mouth sores with drooling unless the child’s physician or local health department provides a note stating the child is not infectious.
* Rash with fever or unexplained rash (red or purple rash, welts that appear quickly, open sores) and burns
* Purulent conjunctivitis is a pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep. It includes a child with eye pain or redness of the eyelid or skin around the eye. Must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning.
* Infestation (scabies, head lice, e.g.) until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
* Tuberculosis (TB) until the child’s physician or local health department provides a note stating the child is non-infectious.
* Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
* Streptococcal pharyngitis until 24 hours after treatment has begun and until the child has been fever-free for 24 hours.
* Pinworm, ringworm until 24 hours after treatment has begun
* Varicella (chickenpox): Wait six days after the onset of the rash or until all lesions have dried and scabbed.
* Mumps until nine days after onset of gland swelling
* Measles until five days after the rash appears
* Hepatitis A virus infection until seven days after the onset or until after immune serum globulin has been given to appropriate children and staff in the program
* Coxsackie (Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease) until all sores are dry and covered
* Flu Influenza out five days after diagnosis as well as 24 hours fever-free
* Coronavirus policy will change. Please refer to Brightwheel for the most current guidelines.
* RSV - Your child must be out 5 days after the test date and be fever-free for 24 hours.
* HMFD - Must be 24 hours fever-free & have no open oozing sores. This policy will change. Follow Brightwheel for the most current guidelines.

The parent must notify the school immediately if the healthcare provider makes a specific diagnosis. Small Wonders must be reported IMMEDIATELY if Hib or meningococcal disease is diagnosed.

A PHYSICIAN’S RELEASE FORM IS REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

* Hepatitis A
* Shigella
* Measles
* Mumps
* Rubella
* Pertussis
* Polio
* Haemophilus influenza
* Meningitis
* Lice
* Scabies
* Impetigo
* Other infectious diseases

Adults working with young children also are likely to become ill. Staff members must follow the policies established for children enrolled in Small Wonders.

Parents are expected and required to pick up a sick child as soon as possible should this child become ill during the day. A child is sent home when a staff member believes their health is at risk to themselves or the other children. It is crucial that you know that we do not take this responsibility lightly, and whenever a decision is made to send a child home, it is done so with great deliberation and thought. We do not have the staff or space to care for sick children who must be isolated from other children. Parents must pick up their ill child within 45 minutes of being notified by a staff member at Small Wonders. If a parent cannot be reached by phone, one of the other people you have listed for emergency notification will be contacted to pick up your child.

Emergency Medical Procedures

We all hope that we are never faced with a medical emergency, but if a medical emergency does occur, our primary concern is the child's well-being. In the event of an emergency, staff members will follow the following procedure.

* A staff member will stay with the sick or injured child and administer the appropriate first aid. If the child is not breathing, a CPR-certified staff member would establish the airway and initiate CPR. If a spinal cord injury is possible, the child will not be moved except by trained professionals. Staff personnel will move quickly and calmly and reassure the child.
* Another staff member will immediately go to the phone, dial 911, and request an ambulance. This person will be prepared to give an address and quick directions. The child’s emergency card will be pulled, and a parent will be notified. The staff person will then go to the front of the building to wait for the ambulance and direct the emergency medical personnel to the child.
* Other staff members will move the remaining children away from the area and discuss the situation with them calmly and reassuringly.
* If a parent has not arrived, a staff person will accompany the child to the hospital, taking the child’s emergency card.
* All information regarding the incident will be recorded on an accident report form.
* In the event of a minor injury or illness where immediate medical attention is not required, the same procedures as outlined above will be followed, except for calling an ambulance. Parents will be contacted to arrange for further medical treatment.
* Incident Report Forms will be filled out for each child, signed by a parent, and placed in that child’s folder.

Discipline

Discipline at Small Wonders is handled positively and lovingly. Rules for behavior are simple for children to remember and understand and are developmentally appropriate.

* We take care of ourselves.
* We take care of each other.
* We take care of our things.
* These are certain things we do outdoors and certain things we do indoors.

Reinforcing positive behavior develops a child’s self-esteem while building a sense of responsibility and cooperation. Children learn to be responsible for their behaviors. Natural and logical consequences are used in learning appropriate behavior. The effects are administered in order, and a rule is broken according to the number of times. If behavior harms any child, the teacher may deem it necessary to begin with the 2nd consequence.

* 1st verbal warning
* 2nd removal from the situation (group time, play area, particular friend, e.g.)
* 3rd, sit and watch
* 4th parent notification of a problem
* 5th parent/director conference
* 6th re-evaluation of the situation

If the inappropriate behavior persists after these options have been exhausted, the parent will be asked for another conference on how to work together to modify the inappropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior that has yet to be limited in a reasonable amount of time may result in the dismissal from Small Wonders.

The school reserves the right to cease the operation of the facility at any time and terminate the enrollment of any child for improper behavior, nonpayment of fees, or failure to comply with health and safety regulations, or the parent or director determines that the child is not adjusting to the school program.

Parental Grievance Policy

The grievance policy for parents is designed to help resolve conflicts practically, humanely, and professionally. A positive approach to solving problems and a professional demeanor will allow us to resolve disputes in a climate of mutual support and cooperation. When a conflict occurs:

* Parents are encouraged to think carefully about the situation and clearly define the concern or problem.
* Parents should first talk with their child’s teacher about the concern and try to resolve the conflict by clearly communicating their fears, listening to the teacher’s perspective, and discussing various solutions to the problem.
* If parents and teachers cannot arrive at a satisfactory solution, parents may arrange to discuss their concerns with the director.

When a problem cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all persons involved, and it is apparent there is no good match between the family’s needs and the school’s goals, the parents may be asked to withdraw the child from Small Wonders.

Biting

Biting is a normal part of a child’s development during certain ages. However, there are times when biting occurs that are not developmentally appropriate. Staff will do their best to anticipate biting before it happens. If it does appear, the child’s behavior will be redirected, and the injured child will be treated for their wounds. If your child does bite another child, you will be notified, as will the parents of the bitten.

Biting other children is considered a severe problem at Small Wonders, and we will make every effort to ensure that it does not become a problem. We do NOT encourage children to “bite back” if they have bitten.

Mealtimes: Morning Snack, Lunch, Afternoon Snack

Small Wonders Nursery School does not provide breakfast but will serve breakfast if your child does not eat before arriving at school, we will serve breakfast with any items you would like to provide labeled in a container or Ziploc bag. We ask that you provide a breakfast or morning snack that DOES NOT have to be warmed up. We provide a nutritionally balanced lunch and an afternoon snack. Children in the infant program are fed on demand as schedules are established over the year. Children are encouraged to try all food served but are NOT required to do so. Meals are served family style, and staff members encourage opportunities for learning foods, nutritional concepts, and responsibility during mealtimes. Staff are required to be at the table with children while they are eating. Therefore, food can only be brought in or served during designated meal times.

Morning snacks are only served between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. Children are not allowed to bring food into the classroom for breakfast after this time.

If your child is away from the center by 9:30 a.m., please notify the school if you plan to bring them before lunch. Children must be dropped off by 11:00 a.m. to eat lunch. There will be no drop-offs after 11:30 a.m. unless previously arranged or a doctor's note is provided.

Outside Play Periods

Children at Small Wonders spend time outdoors, even in cooler weather. Our general rule is that children may play outside when the combination of the temperature and wind chill factor is 32°F or above. We do NOT go out in the summer if the heat index is 95°F or above. If your child is too sick to participate in daily outside activities, your child is too ill to come to school.

We request that you dress your child appropriately for the weather and have a complete change of clothes for your child at the center at all times.

Rest Periods

The Tennessee Department of Human Services regulations stipulate that a child may not be in a childcare center for more than 5 hours without a nap. All children will have at least a 2-hour rest period, depending on the child’s rest patterns. Children are encouraged to sleep but are not forced to do so. Each child must stay quiet on their mat while others in the room rest. Infants sleep as often as necessary and according to individual schedules. You may NOT drop your child off during scheduled rest periods.

Disclaimer For Babysitting

Small Wonders Nursery School will take every reasonable precaution for the safety and well-being of the children while they are in our care. Our program’s responsibility does not extend to any private agreement/employment between the parents of children in our program and any school staff members.