

Ridge Kids Academy, Inc.  
Employee Handbook

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## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Ridge Kids Academy employee handbook is used to outline the expectations, policies and procedure of the school to ensure that all employees must understand and comply with. After reviewing this document, the consent form on the last page must be completed and handed back to your department director. This consent form states that you understand and adhere to all expectations, policies, and procedures of this learning environment. This handbook will be updated from time to time, and the most up-to-date copy will be made available to you. Thank you for being a part of the Ridge Kids Academy family.

WHO ARE WE?!

Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. (RKA) is an equal opportunity childcare center serving the community on a non-discriminatory basis. We are a year-round childcare center that offers care for students from 6-weeks through 12-years of age. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:00 am-6:00 pm. Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. is also equipped with an educational preschool program and an extended educational program for our school-age students. RKA provides quality care and education; We follow state standards and guidelines, both for our staff and our center as a whole.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The philosophy and goal of Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. is to assist our students as they grow into competent human beings, who are confident and equipped with a zest for life, and an appetite for all that life has to offer. We strive to create an environment where children will feel invited to think creatively, explore, ask questions, use their senses, form relationships, and explore autonomy. It's our hope that we will promote learning within the whole child, by doing so: elevating social, emotional, and cognitive development. We aim to provide a well-defined program that is both teacher-led and child-led with wonderful educational and fun experiences for all ages. After all, Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. believes with all our hearts, children learn through playing, doing, and seeing.

We aim to help each child find happiness and satisfaction in all of their accomplishments and aspire to recognize and respect the uniqueness and potential of all children. We wish to develop a relationship of mutual trust with each family that we serve. RKA knows that the open, daily exchange of communication between the parent/guardian and the staff can make all the difference for every child.

#### OUR VALUES

Our vision is to provide a community where all students feel respected, loved, and encouraged to become the best person they can be. Our vision is the backbone of our business, supporting children to develop into their fullest and most significant potential.

Our values consist of the following but are not limited to:

- Quality – We believe every child deserves excellence in learning programs and services to make a difference in their lives and our community.
- Inclusion – all students are included in our learning environment. We welcome all with open arms and love in our hearts.
- Respect – Respect is essential in building relationships with our students and families that last a lifetime. Respect is a key component of our works as it helps to optimize the talents and diversity we bring into the school as partners in the growth and development of every child.
- Relationships – We pride ourselves on having open communication with all partners of our business. This allows us to build relationships with all families.
- Teamwork – The combined action of the educators and the families working together provides an effective and efficient working relationship. By acting together as a team, we work together to provide the best interests of a common cause for all of our children!
- Fun- All children, staff, and families have the most fun at Ridge Kids Academy!

#### OUR GOALS

Ridge Kids Academy's goals provide us a path to our desirable outcomes for our students. These goals provide direction and motivation for the quality of care, moral values, and education we provide.

1. To provide a wide variety of developmentally appropriate practices, that children not only learn and develop but also enjoy.
2. To provide a flexible, calm, and nurturing environment where affection is given freely and from the heart.

3. Independence is encouraged and expectations are clear for all students.
4. To meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of our students.
5. To promote and encourage children to become independent and creative problem solvers.
6. To provide an atmosphere of respect for oneself and one another.
7. To provide opportunities for cooperative play.
8. To create a happy, warm, and exciting environment that is inviting, comfortable, and manageable for the children.
9. To support a caring staff who show genuine respect, love, and encouragement for the children.
10. To offer individual guidance to children based upon careful observation of each child's needs and in keeping with parent/guardian direction.
11. To ensure the safety and welfare of all children.

## A LOOK INTO OUR PROGRAM

### WHAT WE DO AND WHAT WE BELIEVE

At Ridge Kids Academy, Inc we believe each child has the potential to bring something unique and special into the world. By having a respectful and caring bond with both the student and the family, we as a school are able to create a strong foundation for a beautiful childhood experience for our students. Through active exploration of the world around them, play, interaction with others, memorable experiences, and hands-on learning activities, our students develop and grow every second of every day. We strive to have the utmost respect and love for all children who walk through our school's doors. We are a family!

### DESCRIPTION OF AGE GROUPS

#### INFANTS

This age group is 6 weeks to 12 months old.

In the infant classroom, we follow an excellent daily flow. No matter your baby's sleeping and eating schedule, we always come together to make beautiful memories. We enjoy storytime together, outside walks, a learning circle, sensory exploration, and creative art. We also enjoy learning many songs, reading wonderful stories, and interacting with our friends and teachers. We love discovering different textures, sizes of items, and shapes. We love learning about our weekly themes like shapes, colors, animals, and people. Our little ones are always nurtured, cuddled, loved, and adored, and whenever they need something, we are there!

#### YOUNGER TODDLER

This age group is 12 months to 24 months old.

In the toddler classroom, we explore anything and everything we possibly can. Our little one-year-olds love wandering around the classroom, learning through their senses. Our toddlers

have an incredible daily schedule of group time, outdoor play, meals and snacks, naptime, and the most important and fun time of the day, PLAYTIME! We read, get down on the floor, play with children, and have lovely conversations during our group times. We talk about our day, how we feel and what it means to be together in our bright and warm classroom. We enjoy our outdoor playtime and seeing the beautiful nature outside. Singing and playing our days away is what makes our room so unique!

## OLDER TODDLER

This age group begins at 2 years old to 3 years old.

Our older toddlers love to dance, sing and learn through play. We inspire them to explore the world around them and learn something from everything. Socialization is crucial to our older toddlers as they begin to share, use their manners and learn to take turns. In this age group, we begin to count and have letter recognition. We enjoy singing songs to teach us about the days of the week, the months, and the year. We love to dive into our art projects and see what we can create with abundant materials. We enjoy watching our teachers do exciting science projects and love to watch the students guess what will happen and see their eyes full of surprise! Getting outside and playing on the playground is a part of our everyday schedule.

## PRESCHOOL AND PRE-K

This age group starts at 3 years old and prepares the students for kindergarten.

We focus on our social-emotional growth in this age group and explore who we are as beautiful, unique individuals. We learn how to work together and how to conquer objectives by ourselves. We enjoy writing our names, learning to read, and exploring phonics. We appreciate extreme science projects that make us say, "WOW!" We dive into our sensory bin, which helps enhance the learning theme we are studying that week. We enjoy having guest speakers and love exploring the community to supplement our learning. We get outside often to move our bodies and strengthen our fine and gross motor muscles. This age group helps prepare our students for the next grade, Kindergarten. Our little ones are well on their way to a successful journey into the older ages!

## SCHOOL-AGE

Kindergarten students until the student's 13th birthday.

During the school year, Barboursville Elementary students have a safe place to stay in the morning while waiting to catch the bus to school.

After school, Village of Barboursville Elementary students will be bused to us via county bus, while our staff will drive multifunction school buses to pick up students from Davis Creek Elementary and Martha Elementary Schools to provide transportation back to RKA. During the afterschool program, children will be provided a snack and have the opportunity for homework help. Children have access to 4 different spaces throughout the day: an art room (where the

activities may be independent or guided), a STEM Lab, a game room (where children can engage in independent play or group games), and a community space. We also have Good News Club and other community guests come in throughout the week.

We still offer the same activities we provide during the school year but many more during the summer. Parents often even have the opportunity to request that their child receive tutoring services from a licensed CCBOE teacher during their day at RKA (this is a separate fee from your Ridge Kids tuition). In addition to all of the on-campus activities that we offer, children take weekly trips to the Guyan Estates pool (weather permitting), park trips, and many other trips throughout our community.

Our groups are typically out of the building 3-4 times per week. We can also bring many more groups in to do activities with the children, which are at no additional cost to the parents. The summer program is so much fun here at RKA. We can't wait to see you there, and we are extremely excited for your children to tell you all about their daily adventures!

## OUR CURRICULUM

### DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM

At Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. we provide our students with a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is based on The WV State standards. NAEYC, which is the National Association for the Education of Young Children, defines developmentally appropriate curriculum as, "NAEYC defines "developmentally appropriate practice" as methods that promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning." We believe this to be the heart of our curriculum. Our weekly lesson plans are developed through our students' interests and what grabs their attention. We try our best to meet every child's individual cognitive and development level and encourage and inspire them to continue to progress this growth. Ridge Kids Academy uses Creative Curriculum.

### LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Our developmentally appropriate experiences and activities, such as book reading, singing, art activities, games, and journaling, represent meaningful learning opportunities that incorporate early literacy concepts and handwriting in various forms. Language development skills are developed through exposure to letter-sound connections, combining those sounds into meaningful words, and putting words together into sentences to communicate our thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Our language activities foster your child's handwriting abilities, phonological awareness, vocabulary, alphabet letters knowledge, and narrative skills.

## COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: SCIENCE, MATH, AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Cognitive development means how children explore, think, create answers and figure things out. It is the development of knowledge, skills, and problem solving which help children to think about and understand the world around them.

### Math

Early math skills involve children learning the basic concepts of colors, shapes, numbers, counting, simple addition, and subtraction. We begin with learning how to count one by one using manipulative materials and build structures using unit blocks. We also learn how to recognize single and double-digit numbers, and once this skill is mastered, we learn how to add and subtract numbers. Visual representation is key as children build relationships between written numbers and represented items. Children also learn to construct simple patterns and sort objects by color, shape, and size.

### Science

Science helps children develop an understanding of scientific concepts and develop inquiry skills. Scientific development in young children consists of children using their senses in order to observe, compare, measure, make predictions, classify, and construct hypotheses. Students are born natural scientists. Students are eager and curious to explore the world around them. At RKA, our job is to nurture their scientific spirit and provide students with the opportunity to enhance their scientific exploration experiences in and out of the classroom!

### Social Studies

Social studies learning begins as children make friends and participate in decision-making in the classroom. Then it moves beyond the school into the neighborhood and around the world. Here at Ridge Kids Academy, we explore different cultures, places, foods, music, and backgrounds of beautiful people worldwide. We love exploring the world and opening our eyes to the many different beautiful people and places on this planet!

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

Children's emotional well-being during their early years has a powerful impact on their social relationships. Emotionally healthy children are better able to establish and maintain positive relationships with adults and peers. Children are learning to talk about their feelings and the feelings of others. Social-emotional development involves more than just expressing emotions. It involves taking turns, becoming independent, following routines, interacting more with peers than just verbal communication, engaging in meaningful relationships, controlling and managing

emotions, and developing a positive and loving self-image. These skills are crucial for children's successful participation in all aspects of life, school and home experiences, and their overall positive self-growth.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: FINE AND GROSS MOTOR

### Fine Motor:

Fine motor skills involve the movement of the smaller muscle groups in your child's hands, fingers, and wrists. While hand-eye coordination comes far more naturally to some, this is not true of all. Children must learn how to control their muscle movement in their hands to obtain hand-eye coordination and more. There are specific ways we do this in the classroom, such as having your child use scissors, color, play with Legos, draw pictures, and more. These skills can turn into more advanced ones later on, like when your child decides he/she wants to knit, play the guitar, or type on the computer!

### Gross Motor:

Gross motor skills involve movements of the large muscles of the arms, legs, and torso. Kids rely on gross motor skills for everyday activities at school, home, and the community. It's these larger muscle groups that allow babies to sit up, turn over, crawl, and walk. By playing actively indoors and outdoors, each child develops muscle strength, endurance, agility, coordination, balance, and flexibility and builds confidence and social skills.

## SENSORY EXPLORATION

Sensory exploration is a child's way of examining, discovering, categorizing, and making sense of the world, and it's beneficial to provide them with opportunities for sensory play. Here at Ridge Kids Academy, the student participates in activities that allow them to explore different materials and enhance their senses like music and dance games, sensory bin exploration, and playing with a variety of materials that smell, feel, and taste very different!

## ART, MUSIC, DANCE, AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION

At Ridge Kids Academy, we encourage and provide opportunities for our students to explore creative expressions such as art, music, dancing, and drama. The creative arts engage children's minds, bodies, and senses and allow them to explore their imagination, sense of movement and rhythm, and their ability to express themselves through art. Teachers plan activities to introduce children to different kinds of art media, music, culture, and dance to encourage the student's development of creativity and imagination. Many opportunities are presented for exploration by playing with water, dirt, kinetic sand, many seasonal nature items,

and various food items in the sensory table. The arts allow students to dive into different means of expressing themselves and have fun while doing so!

## MEALS

Breakfast will be served from 8 am- 8:30 am. The breakfast is free of charge and will always include grain, fruit, and milk.

Lunch is also free of charge. This schedule varies by classroom starting at 11:00 am. Lunch includes five components. A protein, a grain, a fruit, a vegetable, and milk.

A small snack is provided for your child by RKA. The snack provided will include healthy choices of a vegetable or fruit, popcorn, chips or crackers with peanut butter or cheese, and water.

If your child has a certain allergy that may cause a problem for them at any time. Please make sure it is recorded on the Child and Family Information Form. Most allergies and sensitivities can be avoided, and substitute items can be worked out if we are made aware.

RKA will need to have a "Special Dietary Needs Form" on file for your child in the office to make these menu changes on site, per USDA requirement.

## RKA PROFILE

RKA is an equal opportunity childcare center serving the community on a non-discriminatory basis. Whether your child is new to the childcare or preschool experience, or a seasoned veteran, RKA offers programs that are age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate. All programs offered by RKA are designed to help children and families with transitions, growth, school readiness, and continuous learning.

RKA has an "open-door policy" in which parental visits, conferences, and observations are encouraged. RKA follows all rules and regulations of the West Virginia Department of Health, the West Virginia Department of Human Resources, the Office of the West Virginia Fire Marshall, and the West Virginia Department of Education.

It is the policy of Ridge Kids Academy, in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and other anti-discrimination legislation, and the recent Disabilities Act, to hire staff and admit children to our program without regard to race, religion, age, sex, disability, and/or national origin. There is no distinction in eligibility for admission or in the provision of services.

## FOOD PROGRAM

### Building for the Future

This childcare facility participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a federal program that provides healthy meals and snacks to children receiving daycare.

Each day more than 2.6 million children participate in CACFP at daycare homes and centers across the country. Providers are reimbursed for serving nutritious meals which meet USDA requirements. The program plays a vital role in improving the quality of childcare and making it more affordable for low-income families.

Meals: As a CACFP center, we follow meal requirements established by USDA.

## GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### STATE REGULATIONS AND LICENSING

All Ridge Kids Academy employees must be knowledgeable in the state's childcare licensing rules and regulations. A copy of the state and local guidelines is kept on the RKA premise at all times, and each employee may receive a copy to take home upon request. The policies are also available on the WVDHHR website.

### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

Ridge Kids Academy provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment. It prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment at Ridge Academy, Inc.

### “AT WILL”

West Virginia is an “at-will” state. This means that you may terminate your employment with Ridge Kids Academy at any time with or without notice or cause. It also means that the company can terminate your employment, at any time, with or without notice or cause. While the company generally adheres to progressive discipline, it is not bound or obligated to do so. Again, at the company's sole discretion, you may be terminated at any time, with or without notice or cause. In addition, the company may need to alter your employment status, employment hours, schedule, or demote you at its discretion with or without notice or cause.

### NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

At Ridge Kids Academy, we value all employees and job candidates as unique individuals, and we welcome the variety of experiences they bring to our company. As such, we have a strict non-discrimination policy. We believe everyone should be treated equally regardless of race, sex, gender identification, sexual orientation, national origin, native language, religion, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other characteristics

protected by law. If you feel that you have been discriminated against, please let your department director know immediately. Every complaint will be appropriately investigated.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, "sexual harassment" is defined as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example:

a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.

b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or

c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may consist of unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, sexual jokes, and innuendo, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling, or touching;

insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Ridge Kids Academy encourages reporting all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe they have been the victim of such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor. See the complaint procedure described below.

## CHILD NEGLECT AND ABUSE

The WV state background system will screen all Ridge Kids Academy employees using the appropriate law enforcement agency. Staff will not be alone with children for an extended period. No employee, volunteer, or other adult is EVER permitted to physically, verbally, or emotionally abuse or punish children.

At the first reasonable cause to believe that child abuse exists, the reporting adult will immediately inform the director, who will determine the action to take. The reporting adult will make an immediate phone call to the local law enforcement. As a backup to the phone report, a written report will be completed and filed with the department or executive director.

Keeping administration informed and detailed documentation in ProCare is vital when situations arise where abuse or neglect are suspected.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

It is a federal law that childcare programs maintain confidentiality on a "need to know" basis. This information is shared only when it is necessary. This is important especially when there are specific health and safety concerns. State and Local Laws prohibit the sharing of information about children or employees without written approval from the parent, guardian, or individual. As an employee of Ridge Kids Academy Inc., every staff member is expected to respect the confidentiality rights of every child who attends our academy. You are to understand that the confidentiality of each child's information is strictly maintained to protect the privacy rights of the parents and children. You are in no way to discuss or otherwise communicate any form of information concerning the care or condition of any child with unauthorized individuals. Failure to abide by the child confidentiality requirements may result in immediate termination.

Ridge Kids Academy also has a strict policy that prohibits all employees from discussing their salary/ wage levels, benefits, bonuses and/or tuition rates of any child enrolled in our program, with other employees, parents of the program and/or the general public. You also may not inquire as to the amount of tuition a child's parent pays, or the amount they owe. If there are any questions about a bill, please direct the parent to [www.myprocare.com](http://www.myprocare.com) or contact the director of the department. This information is confidential and may not be discussed. Any employee violating this policy will be considered to have committed a breach of confidentiality contract and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and possibly including immediate termination of employment.

## SMOKING POLICY

Cigarettes, vapes, and other smokeless tobacco products cannot be used on the Ridge Kids Academy property. Staff who smoke must leave the property to do so. You are given a TOTAL of 30 minutes per day for breaks. This means if you need to take an early break to run out and smoke, you must deduct that time from your lunch period.

When returning to the property, you must wash your hands immediately. If you are working in the infant/toddler department, you must wear a smock.

## ALCOHOL POLICY

The influence of alcohol and/or any other toxic substances will impair the health and safety of the employee, the students, and the overall business. Therefore, under no circumstances is any member of staff or other professional allowed onto the premises if they are under the influence of alcohol and/or any other substance abuse. If the administration believes a staff member or other professional is intoxicated by alcohol or any other toxic substance, appropriate action will be taken. The employee will be asked to leave the premises immediately, and the school will take disciplinary action, which may result in termination.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Ridge Kids Academy is a drug-free workplace. This policy applies to all personnel onsite at the school, including staff and volunteers. This policy covers the following substances but is not limited to alcohol, illegal drugs, inhalants, prescription drugs without authorization, over-the-counter drugs.

When a staff member is believed to be under the influence, they will be asked to leave the school right away. If another staff member or administration has cause to believe a staff member is impaired while working on the job, the employee may be suspended or terminated without pre-warning or a write-up.

At any time, the school reserves the right to search any work areas, handbags, briefcases, lunch boxes, vehicles, personal packages, or other personal possession to determine if drugs or alcohol are at the school.

If a substance is found, the employee will be terminated immediately, and a report will be written to the governing bodies, including the police and the state licensing officials.

## EMPLOYEE MEDICATION AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

Any prescription medication provided by a registered doctor must not affect an employee's ability to work at Ridge Kids Academy.

A licensed medical provider must prescribe any prescription drugs required during work hours.

The employee must do the following:

- Take prescription as directed by the doctor
- Only take the dosage as prescribed by the doctor
- The employee must be aware of the precautions of use
- All medication must be in its original container
- Only a single-day medication supply is allowed onsite
- No drugs are to be stored in the classroom.
- All medication must be labeled correctly with the person's name, the doctor's name, and the name of the medicine with dosage.

At any time, the employer may terminate the employee for the following policies on prescription drugs, but is not limited to:

- \* If the present medical condition does not exist and the medication is continued to be used without consent from a doctor
- \*The medication is interfering with the employee's work ethic and daily job functions
- \*The medication is interfering with the employee's overall work performance
- \*The medication is being taken illegally

At any time, the administration has the right to ask the employee for a doctor's notice proving a medical visit. The administration may also ask for a letter from the doctor confirming the employee is able and safe to work in a school environment on the prescribed medications.

## EMPLOYEES USE OF TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Under no conditions are phone calls, texts, or internet surfing on personal devices allowed when a staff member is with children. If you must make a personal phone call, you may leave the classroom to do so, making sure all students are under proper supervision, and the classroom remains in ratio.

The only device allowed to take photos of the students is the RKA iPad. Sharing pictures of the children or school is strictly prohibited.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media includes online electronic tools to help students, parents, and staff communicate effectively. Specific examples of popular social media tools include Instagram, Facebook, and ProCare. The Ridge Kids Academy social media platforms (aside from ProCare) will be managed by the administration and are for informational and advertisement use only.

Upon enrolling a child into the center, all parents and guardians must complete the social media consent agreement. This agreement allows us to post children on our social media platforms and states that parents must be on the ProCare app.

Staff may not post pictures of the children or center on social media; however, posting these things on the ProCare App is expected to occur daily.

While the staff is not prohibited from befriending parents on social media, if they do, the staff member is expected to hold themselves to the professional standard as outlined in the RKA staff agreement. Communication with parents about RKA business is to go through the ProCare App only. This business is not to be conducted through any social media platform other than ProCare.

If a parent/family member of a student reaches out to you through a social media platform, please direct them to The ProCare App for all future communication.

## COMMUNICATION AND GRIEVANCE

Each staff member shall act responsibly and continually strive to improve the school's operational efficiency and well-being. Our goal is always to provide a pleasant and productive working environment. Our ability to achieve this goal depends upon all of us showing mutual respect and maintaining open lines of communication. Therefore, we have an "Open Door Policy." This means that if you have any questions about your job, complaints of any kind, or opinions about matters which affect your employment, we encourage you to discuss them with the department director.

We encourage you to make an appointment for this. Any matter will be treated with dignity and respect as a solution is achieved. We are eager to help you with any work-related problems or listen to your suggestions or complaints. We encourage your input and hope that you will help keep the lines of communication between us open at all times.

## PETS AND ANIMALS

Before any animal is brought onto RKA campus, formal permission must be obtained by the department director. Once approved by the director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

The animal must be kept safe, clean, and have sanitary conditions onsite.

Licensed service and therapy animals are allowed on site with accurate documentation and approval from the department director.

The animal must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian to show the animal is fully immunized, safe, and suitable to be around children.

Employees must be aware of all children with allergies to animals and any parent who has NOT granted permission for their child to interact with animals when under the supervision of the

Ridge Kids Academy staff. This is found in the child's registration packet. All parents are asked to grant/deny permission for their child/children to interact with therapy dogs and/or "other animals" (such as Good News Llamas, Reptiles, and small petting zoos).

## GOSSIP POLICY

Gossip is malicious or actionable talk about someone when they are not present or can hear. Gossip often involves just untrue tales and can include truthful remarks. Gossip is any talk of a person's or institution's affairs, whether personal or professional, innocuous, or slanderous. Gossip can distract, drain, and hurt one's overall job satisfaction in the workplace.

## DEFINITION OF GOSSIP

- A. A person who habitually reveals personal or sensational facts about others
- B. A rumor or report of an intimate nature
- C. Chatty Talk

Gossip is a noun, which means you must DO and act on it. This means gossip is something you can choose to DO or decide NOT to do. To stop gossip from starting or to end it after it has started, simply walk away, do not engage it, or ignore it! or simply state, "this is gossip, and I won't be participating in this!"

## GOSSIP FREE AND PROFESSIONAL WORKPLACE

1. Refuse to participate in any gossip matters. This means making a choice not to engage, choosing to walk away or ignore, or stating you will not participate.
2. Not speak or insinuate another person's name when not present unless it is to compliment or reference work-related matters.
3. If a person does something unethical against the business policies, procedures, or code of conduct, I will immediately report this to the administration.
4. While off the job, I will continue to follow all policies and procedures of the school, especially when it comes to the code of conduct and gossip policy. I will not speak to others about someone in any negative way. I will always commit to using positive and professional communication.
5. I promise to be a professional, be kind, be respectful, and do the best job I can do!

## DISCIPLINARY POLICIES FOR GOSSIP

- A. The first offense of gossip – the Department Director will meet with the employee in a private setting. This meeting is meant for the employee to clarify any confusion and state their reasoning. The Department Director will document notes, and these notes will remain in the

employee's file. Depending on the conversation, the administration will decide if a verbal or a written warning will occur.

B. The second offense of gossip: The Department Director will review the notes from the first offense. The Department Director will write up the employee with a first written warning.

C. The third offense of gossip – Department Director will review the notes from the first and second offenses with the Executive Director and the employee. A final written write-up will occur. At that time, the administration will inform the employee that one more violation will result in probation, suspension, or termination.

## NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

### HIRING PROCESS

Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. uses a variety of outlets to find qualified employees. These outlets consist of Social Media platforms, the RKA website, word-of-mouth referrals, and other contact forms.

The following information outlines the procedure used to find quality candidates:

- Job description and document is written to outline the job and describe the candidate's qualifications the school is looking for:
- The applicant is directed to <https://www.ridgekidsacademy.com/> to submit an initial resume to the appropriate department director.
- An email is sent to prospective employees to set up a good time for a zoom interview.
- The zoom interview occurs, and the executive director asks general questions.
- The following interview is an in-person interview with the department director. These questions will likely be about their personal experience and plans, education, scenario-based questions, etc.
- The final interview is a working interview in which the prospective employee will be paid if hired. The prospective employee will be observed in the classroom for a minimum of 4 hours by the department coordinator and other classroom teachers.

- After the working interview, the candidate will have a chance to sit down and ask any questions they may have about our company and give administration a chance for any final questions the school may ask.
- The Department Director will call to check the candidate's references.
- After the working interview is complete, the executive director, department director, and department coordinator should meet to discuss the candidate and make a final decision within one working day.
- The department director will call the candidate if they are the best candidate for hire. After the call is finished, an email will be sent out to have written documentation of the detailed offer. The candidate has 24 hours to accept or decline the position formally. An initial orientation day and time will be set up; this will be paid. The department director should coordinate with the other departments if multiple departments are hiring so orientations can be done simultaneously.

## EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION AND PROVISIONAL STATUS

The department director will schedule an orientation meeting for the candidate on the first day of employment to complete the required paperwork and review the school's general rules, policies and procedures. New staff members first task is to review, understand and comply with the school's emergency handbook policies and the policies and procedures outlined in this employee handbook.

The following compiles a list of staff orientation objectives, but is not limited to the following:

### Basic Teacher/Classroom Responsibilities

- Duties of Lead Teacher vs. Assistant Teacher vs. Substitute or Floater
- Classroom's Daily Routine: include enrichment activity schedule as well
- "That's not my job" does not have a place here

### Interaction with Children

- Actively participate with children, get on their level
- Appropriate language to use: "No thank you" with a positive explanation, "Friends", etc.
- Discipline Policy: redirection, removal of privilege, quiet time
- Observation & Documentation
- Be on the floor interacting with children

### Logistical Job Responsibilities

- Monthly Newsletter
- Opening/Closing the Classroom: when and what to stock, bleach water usage, etc.
- Procedures that occur during your shift
- Nap time to be utilized for daily sheets, preparing for next week, cleaning the classroom etc.

### Materials in the Classroom

- emergency contact sheets
- Sign in and out sheets

- Allergy Information
- Classroom daily schedule
- Organization of materials in the classroom

#### Responsibilities

- Familiarize yourself with the children's sick policy to reinforce with parents
- Pick up/Drop off Authorization
- Medication Administration
- Positive/Negative/Positive way of delivering news
- Feel free to ask management to proof-read emails

#### Health and Emergency Information

- Emergency info pertaining to children
- Action Plans for children with allergies
- Emergency Protocol: tornado and fire drills
- Handwashing/diapering procedures

#### Walks & Field Trips

- Appropriate temperature for walks and route information
- Field Trips Rules
- Emergency Backpacks

#### Extra Information

- How to submit a classroom maintenance or reimbursement request
- Phone ringing for center vs. individual classroom
- Give new employee list of all contact numbers including cell phones
- Meetings with Management
- Policy for combining classrooms at beginning/end of day
- Garbage/recycling

#### NEW EMPLOYEE FILE CHECKLIST

CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

#### PAPERWORK

- E Employee Physical
- Covid Vaccine card (if applicable- not required at this time: subject to change)
- TB Test

#### Information on Person Employed

Transcripts from College or High School Diploma

Letters of Recommendation (2 for staff, 3 for administration)

Register for the WV STARS Career Pathway (assigned # \_\_\_\_\_)

Mandated Reporter Training Certificate (Due within 30 days) due date \_\_\_\_\_

Modules certificate of completion (Due within 30 days) due date \_\_\_\_\_

NAEYC

Guidance and Discipline Policy

Outdoor Play Rules and Regulations

Food Handler Certificate (Take within 10 days of employment)

Ex. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CPR/First Aid (If card is not valid, the director will try to schedule with-in 30 days.

Scheduled Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Ex. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt of Staff Handbook

Receipt of Emergency Lead Staff Handbook (if applicable)

Probation Policy Contract

Proof of Social Security Number (Social Security Card or a Previous years tax document)

I-9

Background Check Clearance

Tax Documents needed for Federal and State

Direct Deposit Information

## EMPLOYEE 90 DAY PROBATIONARY PERIOD

New and rehired employees will be subject to a probationary period for the first 90 calendar days after their hire date. The introductory and training period is intended to allow new employees to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory performance level and determine whether the new position meets their expectations. This period is used to assess and evaluate the employee's general capabilities, work habits, and overall performance in our childcare setting.

If the department director feels the school's expectations are not being met during this probationary period, the school may end the employment relationship. During this time, if the employee feels the school is not meeting their individual expectations for a learning environment, they may also end the employment relationship with or without cause or advance notice to the employer.

### 30, 60, 90 Day Employee Evaluation

Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. conducts a 30-, 60-, and 90-day review to provide our educators with feedback on their performance. This is an opportunity to check in with all new employees and discuss what is going well and what the school would like the employee to work on, along with providing a general sense of the employee's overall work habits, work ethic, and performance. This standard helps our employees understand what the school is looking for and provides a benchmark for measuring performance.

The 30, 60, and 90-day reviews also allow the employee to discuss their concerns, general questions they may have, or any other comments relating to the school's operations. During the 90-day review, the executive director will meet with the candidate to finalize the employment agreement.

### 1-year employment agreement

Upon entering into employment with Ridge Kids Academy, we will pay for the following onboarding expenses. However, Ridge Kids Academy will debit the funds directly from your last paycheck if you are not employed with RKA for at least one year or longer.

If there is not enough money in the last paycheck to cover this expense, please know that RKA reserves the right to pursue any legal action needed to regain the monetary value of these funds.

\*\*\*Also note, regardless of the amount of time a staff member is employed, RKA reserves the right to debit the funds directly from a staff member's last paycheck and pursue legal action

against them if there are not enough funds to cover an outstanding childcare bill when a staff member leaves.

CPR/First Aid/AED (Infant/Child/Adult)- \$60

Key \$5

Badge (must pay for each addl) \$10

Food Handlers \$20

WV Facts \$20

Fingerprinting \$25

#### GENERAL EMPLOYEE POLICIES

#### STAFFING STRUCTURE

The RKA staff's primary concern is the care and safety of the children. Sufficient childcare staff is always provided to assure that staff-to-child ratios are maintained as specified by our state's licensing instructions. A written staffing plan is maintained by each department to organize staff and enable all to give children continuity of care and supervision. The staffing structure is altered from time to time to comply with the school's overall program needs.

0-24 Months 1:4

2 years 1:8

3 years 1:10

4 years 1:12

Kindergarten and 1st 1:15

6 years old and up 1:16

#### EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

Ridge Kids Academy has the following employees on staff to ensure proper supervision and learning environment.

Executive Director: CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

Department Director: CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

Department Coordinator: CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

Teacher:

: A lead teacher is responsible for the academic, social-emotional growth and development of children in their care who are in their care. The main focus for our lead teachers is to work with parents, administrators and other teachers to improve students' experience and meet teaching goals. Additionally, lead teachers plan, evaluate and improve the physical environment of the classroom to create opportunities that meet the changing needs of their students.

- plan and implement activities to meet the physical, emotional, intellectual and social need of students
- purchase adequate eco-friendly materials for the classroom
- ensure equipment and the facility are clean, well maintained and safe AT ALL TIMES
- maintain classroom storage space
- keep the inventory of classroom materials
- maintain record of classroom budget money
- provide weekly lesson plans in advance
- develop rotating materials which introduce math, literacy, science and cultural concepts

- establish acceptable disciplinary policies
- be familiar with emergency procedures
- attend professional meetings, educational conferences, and teacher training workshops in order to improve professional competence
- plan and supervise class projects, field trips, or other experiential activities
- provide well written weekly newsletters and keep the classroom app updated with fun and proper pictures daily
- ensure children are supervised at all times
- provide various experiences and activities for children including songs, games and storytelling
- teach basic skills such as color, shape, number and letter recognition, personal hygiene, and social skills
- build children's esteem
- comfort children as needed
- clearly and effectively communicate in a manner that children understand
- observe children and complete assessments
- respect children and their feelings and emotions
- develop positive relationships with parents
- keep parents informed of program expectations, program activities and their child's progress
- conduct parent conferences once a year
- train assistants
- keep track of the classroom cleaning schedule and ensure that the classroom and equipment get cleaned on regular basis
- create a professional relationship of teamwork and cooperation
- ensure that assistants have jobs assigned for nap time
- share classroom responsibilities in maintaining healthy environment and positive learning experience

#### Paraprofessional:

The paraprofessional will support the lead teacher in general supervision of the class, and the overall classroom management. The assistant teachers' duties are the following but not limited to, assist in planning and implementing activities to meet the physical, emotional, intellectual and social need of students, assist in teaching social emotional management and independence, assist in the creation and planning of activities, class project, field trips, and other program activities, staying on task and following the daily schedule, and helping to communicate to parents.

- prepare for activities planned by the Lead Teacher
- decorate and keep the classroom attractive and relevant to the theme
- clean shelves and toys once a month
- organize the classroom as directed by Lead Teacher
- attend required Staff Meetings
- keep communication current with Lead Teacher and Director
- maintain professional attitude and loyalty to the school

- treat children, parents, other teachers with respect and dignity

#### Floater and Substitutes:

The floater/substitute position act as a support for all teachers in the classroom. This person is required to have all of the same qualifications as an assistant teacher and have the correct paperwork on file.

- Serving meals and washing dishes afterwards
- Strictly following the food portion guide
- Paying special attention to serving food to children with allergies
- Keeping kitchen and entrance areas clean and organized
- School-age pick-up (driving) as assigned by Afterschool Director or lead teacher
- coverage after 2:00 and other times when necessary
- Maintain classroom cleanliness and sanitation
- Maintaining Ridge Kids Academy's policies and procedures
- Additional duties as needed

#### Food Service Coordinator:

The Cook is responsible for preparing and serving nutritionally balanced meals for the children. This position is responsible for maintaining high standards of quality food production and portion control using standard recipes and also for appropriate quantities of food needed to meet menu requirements. The Cook is also responsible for assisting with supervision of the children at times during the day and when teachers need assistance. This includes but not limited to cleaning, sanitizing and preparing meals. In addition to assisting the children during their mealtimes, encouraging and teaching portion control. The cooks' main responsibilities shall include, but not limited to:

- Food preparation
- Food Serving
- Staying in compliance with state licensing and health standards
- Documentation of food serving temps
- Maintenance of menus
- Cleaning and general maintenance of kitchen
- Serving foods in timely manners
- Being knowledgeable of allergies and good restrictions
- Wearing proper cooking attire
- Food sanitation
- Assists with ordering food and supply when necessary
- Ensure proper portions of food are served
- Sanitization of food serving supply and overall kitchen
- Ensure all food is not expired
- Helps to supervise children when asked
- Ensures a safe and healthy environment with the school team
- Follows all protocols and policies of the school

#### Driver:

## EMPLOYEE HOURS

The employee staffing schedule is based on the needs of the center. The staffing schedule is changed from time to time to satisfy the state's teacher-to-student ratio. Employees are asked to be flexible with their assigned hours of work. Suppose the employee has essential outside elements that affect their working hours. In that case, these need to be addressed immediately with the department director, and they will try their best to accommodate the employee's schedule needs.

## EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All daycare staff are mandated to receive outside education classes for professional development on a yearly basis. This information is documented in their personal employment file.

Ridge Kids Academy provides many opportunities for professional development. These include online courses, in person training, and information on trainings offered in the community. Every staff member is required to complete 54 hours every 3 years (18 hours per year) of WV STARS approved training. These hours must be completed on the staff member's own time; at no time may the staff's WV STARS Certificate expire, or the staff member may be subject to a temporary suspension until the issue is resolved. If the problem is habitual or there have been multiple warnings, this could lead to termination of employment. All staff seeking employment in the Infant/toddler department must successfully complete WVIT followed by WVIT II. All staff seeking employment as a teacher must complete ACDS unless they already have an Associate's degree or higher.

At NO TIME may staff be caught sharing portfolios/binders. If caught sharing these with one another, this will be considered cheating. The staff's instructor will be informed and the staff can face disciplinary action up to and including the termination.

## APPEARANCE AND DRESS

Our employee's neat appearance and proper attire are important to our ability to maintain a professional atmosphere and leave a positive and supportive impression with parents and our school's visitors. Our employees' clothing must be tasteful, clean, neat and appropriate for your daily duties. You are hired to work with children and being down and on the floor frequently is part of the job responsibility. Clothes that are too revealing should be avoided. Clothes that have graphic designs should be avoided, and clothing should not have holes or lavish accessories. Please refrain from wearing leggings with short tops, spaghetti strapped t-shirts, low cut tops, gym attire or short shorts. Please use a conservative outlook when deciding upon clothing. If administration feels an employee's dress is not appropriate, a written warning may be given, and the employee will be given a school's t-shirt to wear. If an alternative outfit is not available, the employee may be sent home that day, without pay.

## EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

## SALARY AND PAYROLL

Salaries are set individually for each employee according to agreement between the employee and director. Salaries are based upon education, experience, performance, and length of service. Salaries are confidential and will be evaluated annually. A salary review does not automatically imply a salary increase.

Payroll will be distributed on Thursday, via direct deposit.

It is the employee's responsibility to notify administration of any changes in their personal bank information.

## OVERTIME

No overtime will be paid without authorization of the department director in advance. During weeks where there is a paid holiday, overtime pay is not given.

## DISCUSSION ON EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

The conversations regarding the discussion of salary, bonus or hourly pay are not allowed. These topics violate the school's policies on confidentiality and are personal between the employer and the employee.

If an employee is caught discussing salary, hourly or payment discrepancies with other employees, a write up will be documented and placed in the employee personal file.

## PAYMENT DISCREPANCIES

RKA makes every effort to ensure payment to our employees is correct. Please understand that mistakes can happen. If a payment error occurs, please notify your department director immediately so we can investigate and make the proper changes.

## PAY EVALUATION

Administration will evaluate an employee pay during their annual evaluation, or when the administration feels an increase is deserved.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

## VISION INSURANCE

RKA offers Ammerits insurance for vision coverage. Your premiums will be taken directly out of your paycheck. This is available for a single person or a family. Sign-up date is the end of each fiscal year. See your department director for more information.

## DENTAL INSURANCE

RKA offers Ammerits insurance for vision coverage. Your premiums will be taken directly out of your paycheck. This is available for a single person or a family. Sign-up date is the end of each fiscal year. See your department director for more information.

## CALL-A-DOCTOR

Ridge Kids Academy offers a Call-A-Doctor program that employees can independently sign-up for that is offered through Ally Health. The cost of this program is \$10.00/month and covers all members of the household. See your department director for more information.

## PAID TIME OFF

INSERT PAID HOLIDAY INFORMATION HERE

## PAID HOLIDAYS

RKA pays their staff for # holidays per year. The staff must work his/her scheduled shift before and after the holiday in order to receive holiday pay.

## CHILD CARE BENEFITS

Full time employees enrolling their child at RKA must apply for Link to avoid paying full tuition cost. The employee does NOT have to qualify, however. RKA must receive an "acceptance" or "denial" within 30-days of enrollment to avoid tuition costs.

Elf the staff member does not qualify, children of staff may attend the program for free while the staff member is working. If the staff member has another activity outside of RKA, the child may attend during that time at a for a 50% tuition discount.

\*All enrollments will be offered on space availability.

\*Any early drop off or late pick-up fees that accrue for activities not related to RKA will be the staff member's responsibility.

## WORKERS COMPENSATION

According to the WV state law, Workers' Compensation Insurance is provided to all employees, which applies to all accidental injuries to an employee while at work. Workers' Compensation is carried to cover expenses and earnings lost due to injury while you are on the job.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security benefits provide a source of supplemental retirement income. Under Federal law, the school is required to withhold, from eligible employees' paychecks, a certain percentage of earnings for Social Security (FICA).

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

In accordance with the Integrity Act (WV Chapter 21), if you become unemployed due to lack of work, you will be eligible for weekly benefits, provided you meet the requirements of the Act.

#### EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS AND ASSESSMENT OF WORK

Employee evaluations and assessments are conducted to assess the work of an employee, increase productivity levels, and encourage motivation in performance. Staff evaluations are conducted for a new staff on their 30-day, 60-day, 90-day, 6-month, and one a year anniversary; after that, evaluations will be done twice a year, or as needed.

During an evaluation, an employee may qualify for an annual increase in salary. Outstanding performance above the school's standards and expectations will be recognized.

Evaluations are conducted by the department director or owner of the center and is based on the following criteria, but is not limited to:

- Fulfillment of job responsibilities
- Meeting the school's expectations
- Knowledge of the field
- Compliance with the school's goals, values, and philosophy of education,
- Reliability and loyalty
- Attendance
- Overall work ethic and attitude
- Curriculum development and creativity
- Working with fellow employees
- Working with parents
- Interactions with students
- Overall communication skills
- Passion and drive seen towards the field of ECE
- Professional development records
- Overall work ethic

#### EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND TERMINATION

#### PERFORMANCE CORRECTIVE REVIEW

If an employee's performance is at a level that does not meet the school's standards, at any time the department director will conduct a performance corrective review. The purpose of this review is to provide insight and information into the employees work ethic and overall general performance at the school which is unsatisfactory and doesn't meet the school's standards.

Immediate changes must occur within 30 days of the review to improve employee's performance. At the end of the 30 days, a new review will be completed for the employer to determine if the employee has made progress on their work ethic and performance.

## DISCIPLINARY POLICY

As an employee of Ridge Kids Academy, Inc., you must perform your duties to the best of your ability. This includes complying, understanding, and respecting all policies, procedures and rules of the school.

In cases where an employee's job performance or conduct does not meet our standards, administration will need to take appropriate action. This action may include verbal warnings, written warning, or termination of employment.

Violation of the following policies, rules and procedures will result in a verbal warning, written warnings, suspension, or termination of employment. This list provides minimal examples:

- failure to maintain satisfactory work performance
- damaging school property
- stealing school property
- harming a student or fellow employee
- negligent performance of work assignments
- leaving children or a child unattended
- failure to immediately report injuries
- fighting, assaulting or attempting to assault children, members of management, employees or visitors of the school
- unsanitary conditions
- leaving the school for any reason during your shift without authorization
- No personal cell phone use while on duty will be tolerated
- consistent tardiness
- not positive attitude
- unexcused or excessive absenteeism
- absence for three consecutive workdays without notifying the administration will result in your automatic termination
- sleeping while supervising children
- misuse or removal of school or employee information or records from school property without authorization
- revealing confidential business information to another employee not authorized to receive it or to any unauthorized person
- disloyalty to the reputation of the school

- disloyalty to the reputation of another employee

## DISCIPLINARY POLICY PROCEDURE

When an employee is not performing up to the standards of the school, or if an employee violates any policy, procedure, or rule stated in this handbook, a meeting will be conducted, and they will be informed immediately of the violation.

The following steps below will be conducted to correct and address the employee's work performance and behavior. At any time, the administration has the right to implement corrective actions which they decide are appropriate based on the situation.

### 1. Verbal Warning:

After the first offense, an employee will receive a verbal warning. A meeting with the employee and the department director will be conducted in which the administration will address the problem and ask the employee to respond and explain their actions. A verbal warning is documented with a written summary for both parties to sign and is used as a letter of confirmation that the situation was addressed, and all understand the seriousness of the warning. This letter also will document the improvements the employee will be required to make immediately, with a timeframe in which the improvements must be made.

### 2. First Written Warning:

A written warning may be given for any violation or misconduct of the following, but is not limited to the school's policies, procedures, rules, unsatisfactory work performance, absences, or tardiness. A meeting will be conducted before the written warning is issued. This is an opportunity for the employee to respond, told face to face of the transgression and create an opportunity for the department director to have a clear understanding of the situation at hand. Both parties sign the written warning form, and it is kept in the employee's file.

### 3. Second Written Warning:

A second written warning will be given for any violation or misconduct of the following, but is not limited to the school's rules, policies procedures, the employees unsatisfactory work performance. A second meeting will be conducted to warn the employee that this is their final write up before suspension or termination. Both parties sign the written warning form, and it is kept in the employee's file.

### 4. Suspension/Probation/Termination:

After the two written warning meetings have been conducted and the write-ups have been issued, the administration (consisting of the department coordinator, department director, and executive director) will decide the next step. Consequences for failure to correct the

misconduct and unsatisfactory behavior discussed prior may result in a 2-day, 3-day, full week, or 30-day suspension or probation period. If the administration feels that the employee, even under probation, won't make progress or meet the school's standard, the employee may be subject to termination from their job at Ridge Kids Academy.

## TERMINATION

An employee may be terminated from the school if the steps listed under the disciplinary policy have not been satisfied. Termination and/or any disciplinary action is at the discretion of the executive director.

A written termination form will be completed by the executive director, and both parties will sign. This form will then be placed in the employee's file. The employee's file will be kept onsite for three years.

## RESIGNATION

Employees at Ridge Kids Academy must submit, in writing, a letter of resignation. Ridge Kids Academy appreciates and encourages our employees to provide at least a two weeks' notice of their resignation.

A resignation form will be completed by the department director and signed by both parties.

## EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Being on time and punctual is important in our school. The students come early in the morning and stay late, and we must have an adequate number of teachers present, and ready to work. Ridge Kids Academy cannot operate efficiently unless its employees can be depended on for coming to work on their scheduled time, and on a consistent basis.

This means that the employee should be at his or her assigned workstation, ready to work, by the time the employee's shift is supposed to begin.

## NOTICE OF ABSENCE

Ridge Kids Academy requires all employees to call the department director no later than 2 hours before their scheduled shift to report an absence. In cases of emergencies, Ridge Kids Academy asks that the employee notifies the administration as soon as possible. If you are unable to reach the department director, please try to reach out to your department coordinator. If you are absent without notifying the school, we will consider you to have terminated yourself from RKA.

## ABSENCES

Each staff member is allotted 6 absences (instances) each year. This is in addition to PTO time.

Each staff member is also allowed to take 5 days of vacation time, so long as it is requested at least 2-weeks in advance and approved by your administrator.

Staff will receive a verbal warning when they have reached 5 instances, at 6 instances the staff member will be written up and put on a WIP. The absenteeism will be discussed after 8 instances the employee will be released from employment (unless extenuating circumstances are present.)

## TARDINESS

The staff is given a 6-minute grace period to clock in or out for their shift. Being habitually late will not be tolerated. If the department director notices that the staff member is continually late for his or her shift, they will be given one written warning and will be placed on a probationary period. If the problem continues further action may be taken. This will be at the discretion of the department director in conjunction with the executive director.

## EXCUSED ABSENCE

We understand that situations may arise where an employee is unable to come to work. The following is a list of excused absences.

- Medical leave
- Maternity leave
- Jury Duty
- Court Subpoena

## STUDENT POLICIES

The following include general policies that educators must follow, comply and understand when it comes to work with, teaching and their interactions with students.

### BITING

Biting is a behavior that is often unexpected and one that can harm and frighten others. Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. Most times it is a temporary behavior and one that is seen between the ages of 11 and 24 months old. Toddlers bite others for many different reasons. A child might be teething, feel tired, angry, frustrated, or even bite when they are overly happy and excited. Biting may also be a way for a child to get attention from other adults or friends. Toddlers do not have strong verbal skills, are impulsive, and lack strong self-control and it is important to remember that they are developing these abilities at their own pace. Biting can also occur for no apparent reason, happen quickly, and can be shocking to observe. Our primary concern at RKA is the safety and health of the children and our staff. We take all biting situations seriously and use our knowledge as educators to handle these tough situations in positive, constructive, and meaningful ways to stop them from occurring.

When it comes to a biting incident, our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve this issue immediately. The school will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain close and constant supervision of the children at all times.

If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent. For every biting incident, two actions will occur

1. Parents will be notified via ProCare.
2. An accident report will be completed and signed by the parent/guardian at pick up for the child who bit, and the child who was bitten.

If the biting becomes excessive and the school's techniques have been exhausted, RKA has the right to discharge the student. Please note, many measures will be taken prior to helping the student to prevent getting to this point. These measures are outlined as follows:

Procedure Employees will follow if Biting Occurs:

We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior.

For the child that was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified via ProCare.

3. An accident report form is filled out documenting the incident for both children involved.
4. Parents/guardians will sign the form at pickup
5. This form is stored in the child's file. Parents/Guardians can receive a copy of the form if asked.

For the child that bit:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child "NO! DO NOT BITE!"
2. The child will be brought to an area of the classroom where they can talk with the teacher.
3. Parents are notified via ProCare.
4. An accident report form is filled out documenting the incident for both children involved.
5. Parents/guardians will sign the form at pickup
6. This form is stored in the child's file. Parents/Guardians can receive a copy of the form if asked.

Procedure if Biting Continues:

1. The child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents. This includes the teacher staying close to the child at all times and holding the child's hand in moments where there is free play, outside time, high energy activities, or times where the child bit in the past.
2. The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.)
3. The department director and coordinator will also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
4. The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.
5. The teachers will also support the learning of appropriate behaviors with books, short acceptable educational video clips, puppet shows, and modeling interactive games and activities.

Procedure if biting becomes excessive:

1. If a child inflicts 3 bites in a one-week period, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
2. An action plan will be created by the department director, the teachers, and the parents which will be followed immediately in the classroom. This action plan can consist of shadowing and mirror techniques, half-day exposure to school, or an agreed-upon disciplinary approach.
3. At the end of the one-week action plan, if the child has 2 incidents of biting, suspension, or discharge from the program will be decided by a meeting between the executive director and the department director if they feel the behavior is disrupting the classroom, cannot be controlled, and harming others.
4. Recommendations for therapy, alternative schooling, and other ideas will be provided to the parents.

Please note, Ridge Kids Academy will do its best to integrate and teach appropriate behavior choices for children who bite or harm others, but in some situations, the environment may not be the best for this child, and the teachers may have exhausted all resources.

## POTTY TRAINING

### Stages of Potty Training

Ridge Kids Academy believes there are three steps to potty training or toilet learning. These stages are:

#### First Stage: Interested in the Potty!

This stage occurs when the child starts to communicate that they have gone potty in their diaper. They show interest in the potty by pointing, saying potty words, and being uncomfortable in their diaper. This is a great phase to start reading books about going potty and watching videos!

#### Second Stage: Toilet Trained with Adult Support

This occurs when the child can use the toilet, but it is the adult who gets the child to the bathroom on a set schedule. In summary, the adult initiates the use of the toilet by the child. During this stage, the child is fully assisted by the adult. The adult walks the child to the toilet, sits them down, pulls up and down their pants, and helps with wiping. Accidents do occur frequently in this stage. This stage's focus is to get the child used to going to the bathroom, being aware of this new and exciting adventure, and assisting them to do it properly!

#### Third Stage: Potty Training

The student is capable of using the toilet, mostly on their own, and expresses the need to go potty on the toilet. They are communicating interest and taking action. The child is showing signs of readiness and is feeling independent to use the potty. Accidents occur very infrequently in this stage! They still may occur, so do not get discouraged.

### Signs of Readiness

#### Verbal Signs:

- The child is able to speak in three-to-four-word sentences.
- The child is able to speak when his or her diaper is wet.
- The child is able to say they feel that they need to go potty or are wetting their diaper.
- The child tells you that he or she needs to go to the bathroom.

#### Physical/Psychological Signs:

- The child stays dry for longer periods of time
- The child is able to hold urine or bowel movements.

- The child has a somewhat consistent bowel movement schedule. This means their bowel movements are at somewhat regular times.
- The child can pull down and pull up pants and underwear
- The child asks and wants to wear underwear.
- The child initiates using the toilet by walking to it.
- The child can learn and initiate the following actions of going to the bathroom, pee, wipe, flush and wash hands.

### General Notes on Potty Training

The following notes are important to remember while potty training your child:

1. Make potty training a POSITIVE EXPERIENCE for everyone!
2. Never make the child feel bad for having an accident. Remember, it is a process!
3. Positive reinforcements are beyond helpful in training
4. Make sure to pay attention to the child's signs of readiness and be ready yourself!
5. Remember that all children potty train at their own speed.

### The Potty-Training Process at Home and School

Ridge Kids Academy requires the potty-training process to begin at home. The process should begin when the parents and child can be dedicated and there are not a lot of changes in the child's life.

The Process at Home:

1. Notify the teacher of a scheduled weekend you plan to start the process. Ensure that the teacher is aware and can start working with your child at school around the same time.
2. We recommend your child stay in underwear for two to three consecutive days. This is because underwear feels different than a diaper on a child. They start to realize that the underwear cannot hold the contents and they feel uncomfortable. Underwear helps produce the sensory signs of going to the bathroom on the toilet to maintain dry and clean underwear!
3. It is important that parents stay close to home and keep the child close to the bathroom while playing or participating in activities to ensure ease of use.
4. We recommend your child wear comfortable, easy-to-remove clothing during this process.
5. Take your child to the bathroom every 2 hours, and reward them with cheering, or other positive reinforcement techniques even if they are just sitting on the toilet.
6. Read books throughout the process and watch clips to support this new and exciting milestone.
7. Staying consistent with the procedure at home is the most important step in this process.

### The Process at School:

A successful weekend at home is defined by the child having 3 or fewer accidents and remaining excited about the process. If your child goes more times during the weekend on the toilet than in their underwear, this is a sign of success!

1. Notify the teacher that it was a successful weekend through a note in the app or face-to-face conversation.
2. Bring extra clothes and underwear in case of accidents.
3. Walk the child to the bathroom and show them how it looks just like the one at school. Stay a minute at the school to have the child sit down and become comfortable with a toilet outside of their home.
4. Talk with the child about how excited you are for them to use the potty at school.
5. The teachers will bring the student to the bathroom every 1.5 to 2 hours.
6. Notes on the potty-training process at school will be provided to the parent.

The Following Guidelines are Suggested When Potty Training and Wearing Underwear at School to Help Make it a More Successful Processes:

- No overalls, pants that have a belt, pants that snap, or any clothing that is hard to get out of quickly.
- Bring an extra pair of shoes if possible as they can get wet too.
- ALWAYS have extra clothes and underwear onsite.
- Inform the teacher if your child prefers to sit or stand when using the toilet.
- Keep a small supply of pull-ups for nap time at the school.
- It is your responsibility to take home any soiled clothes to be cleaned and sanitized. Not the school's!

### INFANT SAFE SLEEP

Safe Sleep Policy all staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and others who care for infants in the childcare setting should follow these required safe sleep practices as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

- a. Infants up to twelve months of age should be placed for sleep in a supine position (fully on their back) for every nap or sleep time unless the infant's primary care provider has completed a signed waiver indicating that the child requires an alternate sleep position.
- b. Infants should be placed for sleep in safe sleep environments; which includes: a firm crib mattress covered by a tight-fitting sheet in a safety-approved crib (the crib should meet the standards and guidelines reviewed/approved by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission [CPSC] and ASTM International [ASTM]), no monitors or positioning devices should be used unless required by the child's primary care provider, and no other items should be in a crib occupied by an infant except for a pacifier;
- c. Infants should not nap or sleep in a car safety seat, bean bag chair, bouncy seat, infant seat, swing, jumping chair, playpen or play yard, highchair, chair, futon, or any other type of furniture/equipment that is not a safety-approved crib (that is in compliance with the CPSC and ASTM safety standards)
- d. If an infant arrives at the facility asleep in a car safety seat, the parent/guardian or caregiver/teacher should immediately remove the sleeping infant from this seat and place them in the supine position in a safe sleep environment (i.e., the infant's assigned crib).
- e. If an infant falls asleep in any place that is not a safe sleep environment, staff should immediately move the infant and place them in the supine position in their crib.
- f. Only one infant should be placed in each crib (stackable cribs are not recommended).
- g. Soft or loose bedding should be kept away from sleeping infants and out of safe sleep environments. These include, but are not limited to: bumper pads, pillows, quilts, comforters, sleep positioning devices, sheepskins, blankets, flat sheets, cloth diapers, bibs, etc. Also, blankets/items should not be hung on the sides of cribs. Swaddling infants when they are in a crib is not necessary or recommended, but rather one-piece sleepers should be used (see Standard 3.1.4.2 for more detailed information on swaddling);
- h. Toys, including mobiles and other types of play equipment that are designed to be attached to any part of the crib should be kept away from sleeping infants and out of safe sleep environments;
- i. When caregivers/teachers place infants in their crib for sleep, they should check to ensure that the temperature in the room is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult, check the infants to ensure that they are comfortably clothed (not overheated or sweaty), and that bibs, necklaces, and garments with ties or hoods are removed (clothing sacks or other clothing designed for sleep can be used in lieu of blankets);
- j. Infants should be directly observed by sight and sound at all times, including when they are going to sleep, are sleeping, or are in the process of waking up;
- k. Bedding should be changed between children, and if mats are used, they should be cleaned between uses. The lighting in the room must allow the caregiver/teacher to see each infant's face, to view the color of the infant's skin, and to check on the infant's breathing and placement of the pacifier (if used).

A caregiver/teacher trained in safe sleep practices and approved to care for infants should be present in each room at all times where there is an infant. This caregiver/teacher should remain alert and should actively supervise sleeping infants in an ongoing manner. Also, the caregiver/teacher should check to ensure that the infant's head remains uncovered and

re-adjust clothing as needed. Infant sleeping areas included within the regular classroom area of each age group.

## TRANSITIONING A STUDENT TO THE NEXT AGE GROUP

Students will transition to the next age group when they are age-appropriate, there is space available, and all parties including parents, teachers, and the department director agree it is the right time for the child. We transition our students to the next age group in chronological age to make it fair for everyone.

Most transitions occur at the start of the new school year, which is in June, but sometimes transitions may occur during the school year if a space becomes open, or we feel it is the best fit for the child.

Ridge Kids Academy's transitioning schedule is based on how the student reacts to the new environment. On the first day, one of the student's current teachers will walk the student over to explore their new classroom, see their new friends and meet their new teachers.

On the second day, the student will be walked to the next classroom by the same teacher but will have more time to explore on their own. If the child does well, the teacher will observe and allow for more time in their new classroom. If we see the child is having a hard time, they will be taken back to their current classroom and discuss how exciting it was in their new classroom. The next day the teacher will walk the student over again to see any progress.

Parents will be notified with detailed messages through the school's app on the students' progress. We believe that slow and steady wins this race, and positive energy by both the new and the old teacher will help the student feel comfortable and confident in this exciting new adventure!

## SCREENS AND MEDIA

The use of visual media, such as television, films, and videotapes, shall be limited to developmentally appropriate programming. Media may be used as a special event, or to achieve a specific goal, but not be used as a regular daily routine.

The director must approve all videos, and all screen time must be related to educational programming developed by the center.

YUMMY, IT IS TIME TO EAT!

MEALTIMES

Meals are served at 8:00 am, 11:30 pm, and 3:00 pm

## MENUS

All food menus are posted in the kitchen, classrooms, and on ProCare.

## WATER AND MEALTIME FLUID

Drinking water is freely available to all children at all times. The water is supplied from insert water fountains or water coolers! At NO TIME should a child be told that they cannot go get a drink.

To comply with the USDA meal pattern, RKA always provides milk to any child over 12 months of age for breakfast and lunch, unless a special dietary needs form is signed by a doctor on file.

## CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL DIETS

If a parent informs you that a student has an allergy or dietary restrictions, please inform the department director immediately. Parents/guardians must notify administration in writing.

Oftentimes this requires a "special dietary needs form" from the WVDE. One copy of these records will need to be kept with the food program records and a copy kept in the child's file.

This information is also posted in the child's classroom and in the kitchen for all to be aware.

Depending on the seriousness of the allergy and form of ramification used, parents may be asked to complete a Food Allergy Information form.

## FOOD FROM HOME

If Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. is unable to provide the food needed for a special diet, meals or portions may be provided by the parent. This must be agreed upon by the parent and director. Potentially hazardous and perishable food will be refrigerated upon arrival. Special foods provided by parents must be clearly labeled with the child's name, date, and identity of the food and will not be shared with other children. These special meals will not be shared with other students, and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure the student has food at the school every day.

## SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

RKA loves to celebrate your little one during the school day! Parents/guardians must confirm this with teachers one week prior to the celebration to go over any allergy restrictions the school has, and the amount needed to satisfy the classroom's capacity.

## DISCIPLINARY POLICY FOR STUDENTS

### DISCIPLINARY POLICY

CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

### DISCHARGE POLICY

Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. has the right to terminate a child's enrollment under specific circumstances. These include any child, who after many attempts, does not progress in their behavior and whose behavior is affecting the large group as a whole. This also includes any child whose needs cannot be met by the school's philosophies. Many attempts will be made prior to help the child thrive in our environment. These include observation notes, therapy referrals and tactics to be used at home and onsite at the school.

The following measures will occur prior to dismissal of a student from the school:

1. The teacher will document the student's behavior by providing detailed notes on the classroom behavior and academic performance checklist and provide additional notes with dates and other insights into why a situation or situations occur and what was the situation that may or may not have resulted in the behavior.
2. The director, parents/guardians, and teachers will meet to discuss any behavior concerns.
3. A Behavior Plan for the Individual is created and agreed on by all parties including staff, parents and administration. Behavior therapists and consultants may be used to support the staff when working with the child.
4. Staff and parents/guardians will have frequent communication to evaluate the success of the behavior plan.

Classroom Behavior and Academic Performance Checklist for an employee to complete:  
When the efforts to bring about change have been exhausted, parents/guardians, the director, and the executive director will meet to determine the next course of action. The school and its staff reserve the right to determine any disputed factual matters regarding termination of enrollment.

## ASSESSMENTS, OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS OF STUDENTS

### ASSESSMENTS AT RIDGE KIDS ACADEMY, INC.

RKA reserves the right to conduct developmental assessments of children's growth and progress, to determine appropriate placements and programming.

### PROFESSIONAL EVALUATIONS

RKA may ask parents to share professional evaluations when necessary to determine how best to meet the needs of their child. This information helps us to provide the best care possible for your child's unique growth and development.

### PARENT AND TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences occur multiple times during the year. These meetings provide parents with insight into their child's growth and development while enrolled at the school, and insight into what parents can do at home to support what is occurring at school. PTCs also provide a chance for the teacher and the parents to form a more personal relationship to ensure the school is meeting the family's standards and so that the teacher can understand the family setting the child has outside of the school's doors.

Parents will be aware of their schedule Parent Teacher Conference Time one month prior to the scheduled meeting.

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## EMERGENCY CONSENT FORMS

Emergency consent forms are completed by the parents or guardians upon enrolling their child(ren) at the center. A copy of these forms are located in every classroom, and always available on the school app.

## EMERGENCY HANDBOOK ONSITE

Ridge Kids has an emergency procedure handbook created to define policies and protocols in emergency situations. This handbook is reviewed often, and all staff upon hire will be trained

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION

If a child receives an injury while at school, an accident report is to be completed through ProCare. The report includes information regarding the time and date of the injury, what happened, how it was treated and includes a picture when possible. If there is blood or there is indication that the injury may need medical attention the report needs to be printed and a signature of the witnessing teacher and the parent need to be obtained, the report then needs to be kept in the child's file (a copy is available for the parent upon request). This report is also recorded in the center's medical logbook.

If a staff member is injured, a paper incident report should be filed and signed by a member of the leadership staff (ideally the staff member's department director or the executive director), a witnessing staff member (if applicable), and the staff member. The original copy should be kept in the staff's file in the office.

## FIRE

Fire drills will be practiced at random times of the day. The drills will occur two times a month. Evacuation maps are posted in every classroom throughout the school and easy to access and see at all times. All employees and students will be prepared for the drills, and review what happens during a drill often so that all are prepared! It is important that all remain calm and keep their heads during any emergency drill!

- The director(s) will inform the staff in advance that a drill will occur later in the week.
- The staff will talk to their students about the alarm, rules and procedures to take while evacuating the building.
- The director will sound the alarm, and the school will take action and do the evacuation procedure.
- Children will proceed immediately to their designated outside school meeting spot.

- The staff member responsible needs to be sure to grab the first aid kit for their section of the school.
- The teacher needs to be sure to grab their cell phone and/or classroom iPad as this will have all classroom attendance and emergency contact information.
- The staff will take attendance of the students in ProCare using the “Name-to Face” feature.
- If safe, the administrator(s) will quickly check hiding spaces in the school for any lost children. They will also check for any sources of smoke or fire during a real emergency fire situation.
- The administrator(s) will then meet the rest of the students and employees at the designated area.
- The administrator(s) will review attendance by checking ProCare.
- The director(s) will time the drill to see how long it took to evacuate the building.
- The administration will confirm with local law officials when it is safe to return to the building. The director(s) will assist with children who need support to return to the building like children of the younger ages.
- The director(s) will complete the first drill log with the following information: date and time of the drill, number of students, number of teachers, and the length of time it took for the students and teachers to evacuate the building.

## BUS FIRE DRILL

CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

## TORNADO

Tornado drills will occur twice a year, at most times during the spring and summer as tornadoes occur during the warmer months. Evacuation procedures are posted in “emergency procedure books” throughout the school and easy to access and see at all times. Ridge Kids Academy employees and students will be prepared for the drills, and review what happens during a drill often so that all are prepared! It is important that all remain calm during any emergency drill!

- The director(s) will inform the staff in advance that a drill will occur later in the week.
- The staff will talk to their students about the alarm, rules and procedures to take during shelter in place.
- The director(s) will sound the alarm, and the school will take action and do the shelter in place/lockdown procedure.
- Children will proceed immediately to the designated lockdown site/shelter in place designated spot. (very back of the sanctuary)
- The staff member responsible needs to be sure to grab the first aid kit for their section of the school.
- The teacher needs to be sure to grab their cell phone and/or classroom iPad as this will have all classroom attendance and emergency contact information.

- In the event of a true tornado, the staff should turn on a radio for live updates on the tornado watch/warning.
- The staff will take attendance of the students in ProCare using the “Name-to Face” feature.
- Students should sit on the floor. Those who should take the safety position by kneeling on their knees and elbows with their foreheads on the floor and covering their heads with their hands.
- If safe, the director(s) will quickly check hiding spaces in the school for any lost children.
- The director(s) will meet at the shelter in place designated spot to review attendance by checking ProCare.
- The admin will time the drill to see how long it took for the students to take shelter.
- The director(s) will confirm when it is safe to leave the shelter-in-place designated spot. The director will assist with children who need support to enter back into the program main area.
- The director(s) will complete the first drill log with the following information: date and time of the drill, number of students, number of teachers, and the length of time it took for the students and teachers to evacuate the building.

#### MISSING CHILD

#### CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

If a child is not accounted for at any time, the staff member responsible for the child should:

- Search the premises for the missing child. Each area that a child could potentially hide should be searched, as well as the outdoor areas of the facility.
- The staff member should also double-check to confirm the location of the child by checking the sign-in and sign-out log.
- If the child is not located after all potential hiding spots and immediate outdoor areas have been searched, the facility director should be notified that the child is missing.
- Begin Lock Down procedure. All exits must be monitored by employees letting no one in or out of the facility.
- The staff member responsible for the child will call 911, since he/she will have the best knowledge of what the child was wearing that day, along with other distinctive features.
- The facility director will notify the guardians of the child that the child is missing from the facility.
- While the police are en route to the facility, the staff will continue to search the facility for the missing child. The staff should look in every cabinet, closet, cubby, and every other location where a child may hide.
- The facility director will stay on the facility premises at all times to be the contact person for the police department, as well as the missing child’s guardians.
- The police should be asked to activate an Amber Alert by the facility director.

#### POISON PROCEDURE

- The Poison Control Center phone number will be posted on the list of emergency numbers by every landline telephone and on or in every first aid kit.
- Poison emergencies or requests for poison information will be made by contacting the Poison Control Center Hotline at 1-800-252-2022 first – unless the person who has been

poisoned is unconscious, not breathing, having trouble breathing or is having convulsions. If any of these conditions are present, we will call 9-1-1 first.

- Chemicals, medications, pesticides, paints, cleaning agents and other potentially harmful substances will be stored in locked areas that are inaccessible to children.
- Toxic substances will be stored away from food and food preparation areas.
- All chemical products and medications shall be stored in their original containers with original labels intact.
- Poisonous plants are not permitted in the center
- Staff must identify plants and determine "safe" prior to bringing them to the facility. If the plant is not on the poisonous plant list, please contact the poison control center (1-800-252-2022 or 1-800-942-5969) for guidance.
- Only a licensed exterminator will apply pesticides.
- Pesticides must be EPA approved with natural pesticides that are non-toxic to humans, documentation of these products are kept in an EPA book at the front desk.
- Pesticides and other potentially toxic chemicals will not be applied while children are present. Application shall be in a manner that prevents skin contact and other exposure and minimizes odors. A staff member will observe the application of the chemicals and verify that they are applied according to instructions on the label.
- The Program Director will notify parents and staff before using pesticides.
- Following use of pesticides or other potentially toxic chemicals the treated area shall be ventilated for the period recommended on the product label or by a nationally certified poison control center before being reoccupied.
- All staff purses and personal belongings will be securely stored to prevent access by children. Purses and other personal belongings may contain items unsafe for children including medications, lighters, pocket knives, etc.

## MEDICATION POLICIES

### CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

This policy was written to encourage communication between the parent, the child's health care provider and the childcare provider to assure maximum safety in the giving of medication to the child who requires medication to be provided during the time the child is in childcare.

#### Important General Notes:

- Whenever possible, it is best that medication be given at home. Dosing of medication can frequently be done so that the child receives medication prior to going to childcare, and again when returning home and/or at bedtime. The first dose of any medication should always be given at home and with sufficient time before the child returns to childcare to observe the child's response to the medication given. The childcare provider must be notified by the parents that a dosage at home was given, and at what time it was administered to the child.
- Medication will only be accepted into the school if the proper documentation is completed and all policies and procedures for accepting medication are followed.
- Medication will only be used for the student whose name is documented and the medication has been approved for.
- Medication will not be shared.

- Medication will always be kept in a locked container.
- Medication will be administered in a manner that protects the safety of the child.
- Medications given in the Center will be administered by a staff member designated by the Center Director and will have been informed of the child's health needs related to the medication and will have had training in the safe administration of medication

#### Communication Agreement Between Parents and School Regarding Medication

Information exchange between the parent/guardian and childcare provider about medication that a child is receiving should be shared when the child is brought to and pick-up from the Center. Parents/guardians should share with the staff any problems, observations, or suggestions that they may have in giving medication to their child at home, and likewise with the staff from the center to the parent/guardian.

The Director or Director Designee is always authorized to contact the pharmacist or health care provider for more information about the medication the child is receiving and in the event that a situation arises that requires immediate attention to the child's health and safety particularly if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.

#### Accepting Medication

- q All medication will be accepted in its original container. Medication that is not in its original container will not be accepted.
- q Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration.
- q Consent forms from parents and doctors will be completed prior to arriving at the school and complete.
- q The child's name must be written on all items.

#### Storing Medication

- q Medications will be safely stored away from children and in a locked container/storage area.
- q Medication containers must have child-protection caps.
- q Medications will be kept in a well-lighted area.
- q Medication will not be kept in rooms where food is prepared or stored, unless refrigerated in a separate locked container.

#### Empty/No Longer Needed Medication

- q When a child no longer needs the medication, the unused portion or empty bottle will be returned to the parent.
- q If a medication is close to expiration, the director will notify the parents to bring in new medication prior to the official expiration date.
- q If the medication is empty, it will be discarded in a room where children are not present.
- q All medication lids will be closed and locked whether the medication is empty or full

### PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

#### Forms Required to Administer Prescription Medication

q Parents must complete a consent form to allow the school to administer medication to their child.

q The school must receive a doctor's note. This can be in the form of a letter, labeled on the container/bottle or labeled on the packing.

q The administering of medication will be recorded in a log with the date, times administered, dosage given. prescription name and signature of the person who administered medication.

#### Receiving the Prescription Medication:

q Prescription medication will ONLY be accepted only in its original container.

q Prescription medications will be labeled with the full pharmacy label. This label must be on the packaging of the medication or attached directly to the medication bottle.

The pharmacy label must clearly state:

- physician's directions for use
- physician's name and phone number
- child's first and last name
- the date the prescription was filled
- The expiration dates
- specific instructions for storing the medication

#### Administering Prescription Medication:

q Only the designated staff member will administer medication.

q Prescription medication will be administered as required by a physician.

q Prescription medication will be used only for the child named on the label.

q The administration of all medications will be recorded in a medication administration log.

#### NON- PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

##### Forms Required to Administer Prescription Medication

q Parents must complete a consent form to allow the school to administer medication to their child.

q The administration of all medications will be recorded in a medication administration log with the date, times administered, dosages, prescription name and the name and signature of administering the medication.

#### Receiving Non-Prescription Medication:

q Non-Prescription medication shall be accepted only in its original container. Medication that is not in its original container will not be accepted into the school.

q Non-Prescription medication shall be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name.

q The container shall be in such condition that the name of the medication and the directions for use are clearly readable.

#### Administering Non-Prescription Medication:

- q Only the designated staff person will administer medication.
- q Non-Prescription medication shall be used only for the child who is confirmed to receive it.
- q Non-Prescription medication may be dispensed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- q The administration of all medications will be recorded in a medication administration log with the date, times administered, dosages, prescription name and the name and signature of administering the medication.

REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION OF ILLNESS, INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS  
CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!  
REPORTING OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

The school will report any suspected case or known communicable disease to the local health authorities.

Parents will be notified through email and phone calls of any illnesses in the school.

The school will maintain a file of reported illnesses that may indicate possible disease that is infectious.

EMERGENCY CONTACT DOCUMENTATION FOR CHILDREN  
CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

Upon enrollment, parents completed an emergency contact form. This form must be updated annual, and it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure all information is accurate and up to date.

If after 3 attempts, the parents or guardians do not answer, the alternate emergency contact person will be contacted.

REPORT OF STUDENT INJURY  
CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

All injuries, whether small or large, must be documented on an accident report form. Employees can receive a copy of this in INSERT LOCATION HERE. The teacher who observed the injury, is responsible to complete the form with as much clear, detailed and honest information as possible.

In serious events, the director or owner will decide to call the parent to notify them prior to pick up.

INJURY OBSERVATION REPORT  
CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

An injury observation report is written when a mark, bruised, or other injury a teacher noticed on the child when they arrived at school. After an injury observation report is written by the teacher who observed it

is a report written by a teacher who observed a scratch, bruised mark, or other injury on a student who has come to school with a scratch, bruise, mark or injury. The observation form will be reviewed and signed by the director, the witnessing teacher and then signed by the parent at pickup. Completed reports will be filed in the student's personnel file.

#### REPORT OF SICK CHILD AT SCHOOL CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!!

A parent is immediately notified first through a direct phone call that their child is ill at school. The teacher will then complete a sick child report form which documents the child's temperature, symptoms, policies for when the child can return back to school and acknowledgement from the parents with a signature on the form.

#### OUTDOOR PLAY POLICIES

Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. uses Guyan Estates Pool, as well as many different neighborhood parks, community museums and farms for their daily outdoor adventures. Below are the policies and procedures all staff must follow to ensure the safety of children outside.

##### General Outdoor Safety Tips for Child Care:

- Never leave children alone outside
- Teach children not to play near the street
- Explain that children must ask for help if toys roll into the street or driveway
- Check the outdoor play area routinely. Remove trash, sharp branches, tools, lawn equipment, and animal feces

##### Safe Set-up of the Outdoor Environment

- Be sure all outdoor play areas are fenced, especially near a street, parking lot, pond, well, or railroad track
- Surround electrical appliances in the play area, such as air conditioners, with fences so children cannot reach them
- Remove gas grills from outdoor play areas
- Keep gates closed and install childproof latches
- Lock storage sheds, barns, and garages

##### Safety with Tricycles and Other Riding Toys

- Children must use helmets when riding anything with 2 wheels or less.
- Reduce choking risks by having children remove helmets when playing on playground equipment
- Use safety straps to secure children in strollers
- Do not put children who cannot sit up well in wagons with low sides

##### Playground Safety

Ensuring that the playground area is safe requires careful planning and monitoring. Remember that infants and toddlers (ages 0 – 2), preschool-age children (ages 3 – 5), and school-age children (ages 5 – 12) have different developmental needs and abilities. Different age groups may need different playground equipment in areas separated by fences to ensure that playgrounds are safe and fun for everyone. Here are some guidelines to assess playground safety.

- Regularly inspect surface and playground equipment for broken, worn, or missing parts. Remove, repair, or replace items immediately. (Inform the program director if you find something on the playground in disrepair)
  - Cover sand boxes when not in use so animals won't use them as a litter box
  - Teach children to stay away from the front and back of the swing area
  - Keep outdoor play equipment at least 6 feet away from pavement, fences, trees, buildings, walkways, and other play equipment
  - Provide guardrails or barriers for platforms or ramps over 30 inches high
  - Cover all protruding bolts or screws with plastic safety caps
  - Never attach any ropes or cords to play equipment
  - Safely anchor to the ground permanent outdoor equipment such as swing sets or climbers
  - Employees may never turn their backs or keep children unattended.
  - Employees must circle the play area at all times to ensure all children are in view and safe.
  - Employees should not be on their cell phone while with children during outdoor playtime
  - Employees should not be engaged in circular "water cooler talk" with their coworkers during outdoor play.
- An accurate count of children must occur every 10 minutes to ensure all children are present.

## GENERAL PARENT POLICIES

### LATE PICK UP POLICY FOR PARENTS

A \$1 late pick-up fee occurs every minute the family is late.

### ILLNESS POLICIES

CONTINUE WORKING IN THIS SECTION!!!! (add covid)

The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- a fever of 100.5 degrees or more
- inflammation of the eyes (excessive redness, glassy or discharge)
- vomiting
- more than one incidence of diarrhea or loose stool
- communicable disease as defined by the Department of Health Services/Center for Disease Control
- unknown rash
- excessive nasal discharge

pain

If your child is sent home due to illness, he cannot return to preschool until he has been free from symptoms for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducer. This is to allow your child time to recover and stop the spread of illness to the other children and staff.

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether or not your child is ready to return to school.

- Mood, appetite, behavior and activity are again normal
- No fever for 24 hours without a fever reducer
- Antibiotics (have been used for a full 24 hours)
- Vomiting cleared for 24 hours
- diarrhea cleared for 24 hours
- Frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge resolved
- Pain resolved

It is your responsibility to notify the school if your child has a communicable disease or infestation such as: measles, mumps, chicken pox, or head lice. A child may be readmitted without a statement from a physician only if the child has been absent for a period of time equal to the longest incubation period of the disease as specified by the Department of Health and Social Services. The local Health Department will immediately be notified of all communicable diseases and a note will be posted in the parent information center when there has been exposure to a communicable illness in the center.

Children returned to the center with signs of illness or communicable disease will be refused entry into the preschool.

Please consult with the director if you need additional information.

Great Example

Left off here

#### ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

Upon arriving at the school, parents must pull up in the designated pick up and drop off spot in the front of the building. Parent's must walk their child up to the front door. The teacher will be ready to sign the child in and assist the child with putting their belongings away. Drop off time is between 7 and 9 am.

#### DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

The allocated pick-up time is from 4pm to 6 pm daily. If you plan to pick up your child earlier, please notify administration 2 hours prior through email. Upon picking up your child, you are

responsible to grab their belongings. This includes nap time items, artwork and other personal items.

#### PICK UP AUTHORIZATION

For the safety of the child, the only people authorized to pick up a child are those designated by the parent/guardian on the child's approved pick-up list. If a child is to be released to anyone other than the person(s) listed, a written note authorizing pick up must be received prior to pick-up time.

Pick Up Authorization Process:

- Parents/guardians must inform INSERT SCHOOL NAME (call, leave a note at drop off) of the name of the person who is picking up their child on any day when they themselves are not.
- The "Authorized Pick-Up Person" must be at least 18 years old and may be asked to provide a photo ID to the staff.
- This authorization shall remain in force until edited or rescinded in writing by the signers of this authorization.

#### LESSON PLANNING

INSERT SCHOOL'S NAME studies weekly thematic units for each age group. The thematic units focus on the students interests and are developmentally appropriate.

#### PLANNING ACTIVITIES

The lead teacher of the classroom must have the lesson plan complete and organized and handed into administration the Thursday prior to the week of the study. Staff members are responsible for carrying out the lesson plan and working the learning in well with the daily schedule of activities.

#### WEEKLY THEMES

Here at INSERT SCHOOL'S NAME, our teachers create weekly theme units. These are focused on our students' ages and are developmentally appropriate. In August, our teachers work with administration to provide a weekly theme list for the entire school year. This is provided to the parents at the beginning of the school year, as they are a valuable partner in the child's growth and development.

#### PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parent teacher communication starts from the moment the child enters the doors of the school. Parent's impressions are formed right away, so it is important to understand how important your

verbal and nonverbal communication habits are to parents. Parent teacher communication is critical to providing the best care for their children.

#### DAILY REPORTS

Daily reports are provided insert HOW YOU COMMUNICATE. If you have any questions regarding your child's daily report form, parents must notify teachers immediately through email, or a phone call to the school. As an employee, it is your responsibility to respond promptly and factually.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYMENT HANDBOOK

I \_\_\_\_\_ an employee at Ridge Kids Academy, Incorporated have received a copy of the Ridge Kids Academy, Inc. Employment Handbook.

I agree and understand the policies and procedures listed in this handbook and will comply with the school's rules and regulations.

I understand that these policies and procedures listed in this handbook were last updated 2/2/22 but are subject to change to reflect the needs of the program.

I understand I will be made aware of these changes in a timely fashion, and I will always adhere to the most up to date handbook.

Employee Signature    Date

Administration Signature    Date