



## PARENT HANDBOOK

### **ABQ Children's Academy**

9924 Menaul Blvd NE

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112

505-296-8656

[www.abqchildrensacademy.com](http://www.abqchildrensacademy.com)

[abqchildrensacademy@yahoo.com](mailto:abqchildrensacademy@yahoo.com)

License # 168155

**A CYFD Child Care Assistance Provider**

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# Welcome to ABQ Children's Academy!

This Parent Handbook outlines what our program offers your child and family and information to support your child's school success. Please read this handbook and refer back to it at any time. In order to complete your child's enrollment, we require a signature confirming that you received the Handbook and agree to the policies outlined within. We strive to maintain open communication between you and your child's teacher and our director. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact our director, Natalie Eisenhart at 505-296-8656.

## Mission Statement

The mission of ABQ Children's Academy is to nurture each child's development and creativity and foster a love of learning that prepares them for future school and personal success.

## Philosophy Statement

At ABQ Children's Academy we believe that every child is a unique and whole person—capable of exercising their agency through problem solving and making their own decisions. Their environment, which includes the intellectual and emotional support from their caregivers, provides the opportunities they need to develop their sense of self, social skills and problem-solving abilities. We believe that children can learn more about their world, themselves and how they learn through *guided play*.

We define *guided play* as play opportunities that have been designed to:

- Challenge students to make sense of a new concept,
- Introduce a problem solve, and/or
- Present a task to complete or work toward completion of a project

When children are engaged in meaningful experiences that allow for playful exploration, they learn more because they what they learn helps them make sense of the bigger world around them.

At ABQ Children's Center, we take great care to select the toys, tools, and resources that surround the children in their classrooms. We have also spent years developing our own curriculum that provides meaningful learning experiences.

## About Our Program

### Location and Licensing Information

ABQ Children's Academy is located at 9924 Menaul Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM. Our license number is 168155.

Please be aware that neither the license holder nor any of its staff does not carry liability or accident insurance.

### Days and Hours of Operation

ABQ Children's Academy is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm. We operate on the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) schedule, so we are closed for APS holidays and breaks. However, we may not observe all APS teacher in-service days. For days where our operations differ from the APS schedule, we will post notices on our door and/or next to the sign-in/out sheet as well as our website.

ABQ Children's Academy's regular school year runs from mid-August through the end of May, and summer programs are available. A yearly calendar is provided to every family and is posted in every classroom and on the website with details about school breaks and holidays.

### Attendance Options and Services

ABQ Children's Academy offers many different preschool schedules to accommodate each family as best as possible. Attendance options include:

- Half-Day preschool is available from 8:00 am-11:30 am
- Full-Day preschool is available 8:00 am-3:00 pm

Students may attend half- or full-day preschool:

- 2 days/week (Tuesday, Thursday)
- 3 days/week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)
- 5 days/week (Monday through Friday)

Before- and after-care is available daily from 7:00 am-8:00 am and from 3:00 pm-6:00 pm with some holiday exceptions. Before- and after-care is available at the rate of \$4.00/hour, charged to the nearest quarter hour.

### Tuition

Monthly tuition rates for each attendance options are as follows:

	Half-day	Full-day
2 days/week	\$140.00	\$280.00
3 days/week	\$210.00	\$420.00
5 days/week	\$350.00	\$700.00

## Food

Your child should have a healthy breakfast before being dropped off at or after 8:00 am. Students should come prepared for:

- Mid-morning snack
- Lunch

Students attending after-school care should also have an afternoon snack.

For the health and safety of all our students, all food sent to ABQ Children's Academy with your child must conform to allergy restrictions of any child in the classroom. Information about class allergies will be posted in the classroom, and parents will be notified at the beginning of the school year and as information becomes available throughout the academic year.

ABQ Children's Academy is working on getting catered school lunches. Updated information will be published in the Parent Handbook and on the website as it becomes available.

## Classroom Celebrations

We will have classroom parties or special snacks for some holidays and birthdays. Families may sign up to supply party items, such as food, drinks, paper products, etc.

All party-related food and beverages will adhere to classroom allergy restrictions.

## Dress and Supplies

Children should be dressed appropriate for the weather. We encourage you to dress your children in everyday play clothes and shoes as we involve students in many activities that require free movement and/or may result in mild soiling of your child's clothes. (We want students to feel free to experiment without worry of getting dirty.)

Each child should have an extra change of clothes either sent to school each day or left at the school in case of soils. When extras are used, please send another set the next day your child attends.

Each student is responsible for supplying many of the consumable materials used in the classroom. A supply list for each classroom is provided at the beginning of the year and available on the website. ABQ Children's Academy also requires a \$50 supply fee, due at the time of enrollment, to cover the cost of additional consumables.

## About Our Curriculum

The teachers at ABQ Children’s Academy know that every Child learns at their own rate, and our curriculum provides the resources and opportunities for each child to learn at their own pace and in ways that most interest them.

Our curriculum is carefully designed to meet the unique needs of each child through high student-teacher and peer-to-peer interactions. Our approach aims to increase each student’s self-efficacy in their learning environment so that they develop confidence that will serve them throughout their schooling experiences.

Our curriculum is also designed to support growth across all developmental domains:

**Academic**—includes but is not limited to number and letter recognition, sequencing, counting concepts, pre-writing and pre-reading activities

**Scientific thinking**—includes but is not limited to experiments and discussions, nature explorations and science-related language/vocabulary activities

**Social studies**—includes but is not limited to holidays, manners, community workers, Spanish and ASL (American Sign Language) language and cultural exploration

**Social**—includes but is not limited to communication with peers and adults, respectful interactions with all living things, and self-enabled problem-solving

**Emotional**—includes but is not limited to self-confidence, self-esteem, self-control, and independence

**Physical**—includes but is not limited to gross and fine motor skills

**Creative**—includes but is not limited to drama, arts, materials exploration

**Spiritual**—includes but is not limited to prayer, Bible stories, Christian concepts and values

## Daily Schedule

Each classroom’s daily schedule is designed to accommodate all learning styles and strike a balance between individual and group activities. The daily schedule is posted in each classroom and may be viewed on the website.

## School-Home Communication

### Open-Door Policy

Every child's school success requires cooperation from parents and teachers. We have developed a number of communication strategies to keep parents informed of your child's daily activities and progress. Parents are also welcome to visit their child's classroom at any time, and we encourage parents to proactively communicate questions or concerns with their child's teacher and/or the center director. Teachers may be contacted by phone at 505-296-8656 or via email at [abqchildrensacademy@yahoo.com](mailto:abqchildrensacademy@yahoo.com). Please put your child's name and the teacher's name in the subject line.

### Routine Communication

Each child will have a communication folder that is intended for all families but is especially important for students who do not see teachers every day. This folder is best utilized if it stays in the child's backpack and is checked daily by guardians.

Any special news and a monthly newsletter will be sent home in the communication folder. Please read all information sent home to ensure your child is involved and prepared for all the opportunities that ABQ Children's Academy provides.

### Conferences and Assessments

Assessments are performed four times a year, and parent-teacher conferences are held twice each academic year. A teacher or a parent may request a meeting to discuss your child's progress at any time.

## Help Your Student Be Successful

Providing a routine schedule for your child makes the school process an easy transition. We encourage families to help ensure that students get a full night's rest and nutritious meals so that your child has the best opportunity to succeed. Making sure that your child attends most school days and on time helps them get the most from the learning experiences we provide at ABQ Children's Academy.

## Policies and Procedures

### Enrollment and Disenrollment

Enrollment is open to all children ages 18 months to 5 years old. To enroll, parents/guardians must complete a full registration packet, which includes:

- Enrollment Agreement
- Registration Form
- Emergency Contact Form
- Immunization Record or Immunization Exemption Form
- Photo Release Form

A \$100.00 registration fee is required to secure a spot in our program.

Parents may get forms from ABQ Children's Academy or download them from the website.

Parents must provide two weeks' notification in writing (with signature) of their intent to disenroll their child ABQ Children's Academy. A final invoice will be prepared reflecting tuition and any outstanding charges up to the date of disenrollment. If no notice is provided, tuition will continue to be charged at the rate of selected attendance option on the Enrollment Agreement and/or Registration form.

### Confidentiality

All student information is kept confidential. Students' records and forms may only be accessed by authorized persons, including the child's parents/guardians, ABQ Children's Academy staff, and the state licensing agency.

### Payment

Parents/guardians will receive an invoice for monthly tuition and any charges for before-/after-care received the previous month on or before the first business day of each month. Full payment is due no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month. After the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, a \$20 late fee will be added to the account. If no payment is received within 30 days of the late fee, your account will be suspended for nonpayment. Students may not attend school until all back tuition, charges, and fees are paid in full.

### Daily Drop-off and Pick-up

Children must be signed in and out every day with full signature by an authorized adult. The sign-in sheet is available in the lobby area of ABQ Children's Academy. We ask that you do not leave until the teacher or co-teacher has acknowledged his/her presence and is given an okay on health inspection.

At pick-up, your child's teacher needs to be notified that the parent/guardian/authorized adult is there for pick-up. A student will only be released to an adult listed on the child's Emergency Contact Form. A picture ID is needed for adults who do not regularly pick the child up from school.



ABQ Children's Academy must be informed in writing with the parent's/guardian's full signature of any adult to be added to the authorized pick-up list.

ABQ Children's Academy offers both before- and after-school care. Our doors open at 7:00 am and close at 6:00 pm. Any child dropped off before 8:00 am will be checked into before-care. Any half-day student who remains after 11:30 am or full-day student who remains after 3:00 pm will be checked into after-care. A late pick-up charge will apply to any child picked up after 6:00 pm.

Before- and after-care is provided at the rate of \$4.00/hour. At the beginning of each month you will be billed for before-/after-care charges with the next month's tuition.

### Late Pick-up

A late charge of \$1.00/minute will be charged for any student who is picked up after 6:00 pm. Charges will be added to the following month's bill.

*After the first 5 minutes:* Parents/guardians will be contacted. If there is no answer, other contacts listed in the student's records will be contacted.

*After 45 minutes:* If no authorized contact can be reached and we have no assurance that the child will be picked up or if an authorized adult has still not arrived at ABQ Children's Academy, we will contact the proper authorities. For your child's safety, he/she may be surrendered to the custody of the Albuquerque Police Department or Child, Youth and Family Department. In the event that authorities must be notified, a flat fee of \$50.00 will be assessed to your account, due with all tuition, charges, and fees by the 14<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Late payments and nonpayment policies apply.

### Notification of Absence

If your child will be absent because of illness or personal reasons, please notify ABQ Children's Academy via phone or email no later than 9:00 am of the day of the absence.

Parents may discuss planned absences (e.g. vacations or extended medical leave) with their child's teacher to develop strategies to continue your child's academic and social development.

We ask that parents provide a doctor's clearance to return to school for illness-related absences that last more than one week.

### School Closures

Parents will be notified of any emergency school closures and/or weather-related start delays via email and text. To the greatest extent possible, we will also post notices on the website home page.

## Field Trips

For the safety of our students, we do not offer any off-site field trips. However, we invite visitors come to ABQ Children's Academy to provide exciting learning opportunities.

## Discipline

ABQ Children's Academy views discipline as part of the learning process. Discipline is not synonymous with punishment but a systematic reinforcement of the idea that with particular choices and actions come consequences. Our approach to discipline require that:

1. All expectations of our students need to be age-appropriate and clearly communicated using language they understand
2. All consequences are clearly communicated to students
3. All consequences are made fair by adapting them to accommodate each child's development
4. The environment and opportunities for misbehavior are limited by keeping children busy with meaningful tasks and activities

Our disciplinary procedures are as follow:

1. A child will be given a verbal warning at the first notice of an undesirable behavior.
2. If the undesirable behavior continues after the first warning, the child will be redirected to a new activity.
3. If redirection does not achieve a satisfactory behavior change, the child will be given the opportunity to self-sooth by being placed at a table with learning manipulatives apart from other students. Once sufficient time has passed, a teacher will have a conversation with the student about the problem behavior and appropriate ways to conduct themselves in the classroom and/or deal with stimulation and emotions.

Our teachers work together with each other and with students and their parents to understand why a problematic behavior continues and encourage new positive behaviors. We use positive reinforcement as much as possible to create a nurturing and respectful environment among peers and teachers.

## Health and Safety

Your child's health and safety are our top priorities. All ABQ Children's Academy faculty and staff are trained on emergency procedures, including fire extinguisher deployment, evacuation plans, and communications/reporting with parents and regulatory agencies following an event.

## Security

Children are under the direct supervision of trained staff and all safety rules are observed by staff at all times. Medications and any potentially hazardous substances are kept locked and stored away out of children's reach. Toys and furniture are inspected and sanitized regularly to maintain a safe environment.

Children must be signed in and out every day with full signature by an authorized adult. A classroom count is made every time students move from one activity to another. All doors remain locked at all times, and children have limited access to outside doors.

Should a child ever become missing from the premises, staff will thoroughly search the building and grounds. If the child is not found, the police and guardian will be notified while the staff begins a search of the surrounding areas.

## Fire Safety

ABQ Children's Academy conforms to all fire regulations as designed by the State Fire Marshall. A fire evacuation route is mapped out and posted in every room. Emergency phone numbers and the address of the building are posted on every phone. Children are taught and regularly practice fire evacuation drills.

## Individual and Community Health

The State of New Mexico requires a signed record of all immunizations be on file for each child.

## Allergies

An Allergy Action Plan will be developed for any child with allergies, and all ABQ Children's Academy staff will be trained to provide care/emergency care as needed. Allergy Action Plans will be posted in the classroom and in the kitchen area (for food-related allergies).

If any child's allergies require the restriction of food or other items that may be brought to school, parents/guardians will be notified through your child's Communications folder and email (if valid email address is on file). Classroom-wide allergy notifications may also be posted on the class's web page. (No identifying information will be included in any public or private communications from ABQ Children's Academy.)

## Health Inspection

Before dropping your child off for school, you should thoroughly check your child before he/she associates with peers. The staff has the right to send a student home at any time if he/she shows sign(s) of illness.

Below is a guide to determine when your child may return to school after illness:

Sign/Symptom of Illness	May Return When
Fever of 101°F or greater	Symptom-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication
Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lethargy</li> <li>• Uncontrolled coughing</li> <li>• Inexplicable irritability or persistent crying</li> <li>• Difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing</li> </ul>	
Diarrhea (two instances not associated with dietary changes or medications);	Diarrhea has ceased for 24 hours or be deemed <i>not</i> infectious by a licensed health care professional
Hard stools or blood in stools not explainable by dietary change or medication	
Vomiting (one instance)	Vomiting has ceased for 24 hours or cause of vomiting be deemed not contagious by a licensed health care professional <i>and</i> individual is not in danger of dehydration in order to return
Persistent abdominal pain that persists for 2 hours or longer or intermittent pain accompanied with fever and/or other signs/symptoms of illness	
Mouth sores with drooling,	Sores are resolved or a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
Rash	A physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
Pink eye (conjunctivitis)	24 hours has elapsed from initiation of treatment
Head lice	24 hours has elapsed from initiation of treatment
Scabies	Treatment has been completed
Tuberculosis	A health care provider deems that the individual is receiving appropriate therapy and can attend child care
Impetigo	24 hours has elapsed from initiation of treatment
Hand Foot and Mouth	Sores have dried and crusted and individual has been fever-free for 24 hours
Strep throat	24 hours has elapsed from initiation of antibiotic treatment and individual has been fever-free for 24 hours
Chicken pox	All sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
Pertussis	5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
Mumps	9 days have elapsed since onset of symptoms

Hepatitis A virus	7 days have elapsed since onset of symptoms
Measles	4 days have elapsed since onset of rash
Rubella	6 days have elapsed since onset of rash
Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion	
Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling	

### Communicable Diseases

Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease (see list below). A doctor's authorization is needed before returning to school.

- Arboviral disease
- Brucellosis
- *Campylobacter* Infection
- Chikungunya virus disease
- *Clostridium difficile*
- Coccidioidomycosis
- Colorado tick fever
- Cryptosporidiosis
- Dengue
- *E. coli* O157:H7 infections
- *E.coli*, shiga-toxin producing (STEC) infections
- Encephalitis
- Giardiasis
- Group A streptococcal invasive infections
- Group B streptococcal invasive infections
- Hansen's Disease/Leprosy
- Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome
- Hemolytic uremic syndrome
- Hepatitis A (acute)
- Hepatitis B (acute or chronic)
- Hepatitis C (acute or chronic)
- Hepatitis E (acute)
- Influenza-associated pediatric death
- Influenza (lab-confirmed hospitalization only)
- Legionnaires' disease
- Leptospirosis
- Lyme disease
- Malaria
- Mumps
- Necrotizing fasciitis
- Psittacosis
- Q fever
- Relapsing fever
- Rocky Mountain spotted fever
- Salmonellosis
- Shigellosis
- St. Louis encephalitis infections
- *Streptococcus pneumoniae* invasive infections
- Tetanus
- Trichinellosis
- Toxic shock syndrome
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- *Vibrio* infections
- West Nile virus infections
- Western equine encephalitis infections
- *Yersinia* infections

### Medication

ABQ Children's Academy staff may administer medication as needed during the school day upon completion of a signed Medication Authorization Form (available at the school or on the website). The medication must be in original bottle and labeled in permanent marker with full name, dosage, and date of prescription along with proper paperwork. Medications are kept in a locked medication box and administered by our director. We provide documentation of all medications administered under our care.

**Sick Child**

If a child becomes sick or injured while at school, parents/guardians will be contacted for pick-up. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact other authorized adults listed in the child's records for pick-up.

**Serious Injury**

In case of any serious injury, the center director or lead teacher will be in charge of your child's care. Emergency professionals will be contacted immediately, followed by attempts to contact the child's parents/legal guardians or other authorized adults as listed in the child's records. Parents/guardians will assume any expenses not covered by the school's insurance as indicated on consent forms are held in child's records.

**Accident/Incident Reports**

An accident/incident report will be completed by supervising staff for any incident except minor scratches or abrasions received during play or daily activities. All reports are filed in the child's records and signed by the child's parent/guardian.

**Child Abuse**

All staff members are trained to identify signs and symptoms of child abuse and are, under penalty of fine and/or jail time, to report any sign of any form of child abuse to the proper authorities. ABQ Children's Academy follows all regulations stated by The New Mexico Child Welfare Handbook.

**Potty Training and Toilet Use**

Successful potty training requires a combined effort from both the family and school.; it is not a process you can rush. If your child is not physically or emotionally ready to potty train, it may be difficult to motivate their interest. Once your child is ready, potty training consists of verbalizing when bathroom is needed, ability to unfasten and fasten most clothing, and ability to clean themselves. ABQ Children's Academy staff always assists and monitors children but encourages self-help.

## Emergency Evacuation

In case of an emergency the following actions will be taken to ensure our students safety:

1. Each class will have take a report of the number of students in attendance that day and gather the emergency back pack that contains the students' information and supplies required to properly take care of each child.
2. Teacher will have all students line up and exit the building.
3. Teachers will keep count of students in their care and escort the children to the office building parking lot at 10200 Menaul Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112.
4. If the first evacuation location is not available or is unsafe, the children will be escorted to Matheson Park at 10809 Lexington Ave NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112.
5. Teachers will then begin to contact parents/guardians of each child. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, the teacher will then begin to contact other emergency contacts listed on the students' information sheets.
6. Teacher will stay with the children at either of the locations listed above until they are picked up by an authorized adult.

There are currently no students with special needs enrolled at ABQ Children's Academy at this time. Emergency evacuation/disaster plans will be updated to accommodate a student with special needs as necessary.