



# PARENT HANDBOOK

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## THE GOLD STANDARD OF EDUCATION

**SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY 2**

**1308 S Federal Highway**

**Hollywood, FL 33020**

**954-736-9000**



# **PARENT HANDBOOK FOR SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY**

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# SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

## 1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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### 1.1 POLICY: MISSION STATEMENT

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY believes a positive early childhood experience is the foundation for lifelong learning. Our mission is to foster emotional, social, and intellectual growth in an environment that values individuality, curiosity, and a love for learning.

We provide a nurturing space where children can explore, discover, and develop strategic thinking and problem-solving skills through a child-centered curriculum. Supported by dedicated and highly qualified staff, we ensure a safe, secure, and enriching learning environment.

Our goal is to offer high-quality, socially enriching programs where children acquire knowledge, develop skills, and experience joy throughout their educational journey.

### 1.2 POLICY: WELCOME

Welcome to SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, a licensed educational facility under Florida statutes, DCF regulations, and DOE standards.

Since 2010, we have provided a nurturing environment for children, offering diverse, state-of-the-art programs designed to support their emotional, social, and intellectual development. Our enrichment activities include mathematics, music, art, and science labs.

Our highly qualified teaching staff, who hold advanced degrees and possess extensive experience in early childhood education, collaborate with families to provide a comprehensive and fulfilling learning experience for all learners.

We are committed to fostering discovery, growth, and happiness in every child we serve.

### 1.3 POLICY: PHILOSOPHY

At SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, we are committed to providing a unique and enriching early childhood experience.

#### **What Makes Us Unique:**

1. Modern, state-of-the-art facility with secure access.
2. Safe and nurturing environment for all children.
3. Sunshine State Standards-based curriculum by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
4. Multilingual programs to enhance cognitive development.
5. Highly qualified and certified teaching staff.
6. Low student-to-teacher ratios for personalized attention.
7. Freshly prepared meals and snacks by a licensed caterer.
8. Advanced playgrounds, including a covered play area.

9. Hours of operation:

- Elementary school  
2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – 7:30 AM – 2:30 PM  
Kindergarten – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade – 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM
- Preschool / VPK – 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM
- After school – 3:00 PM – 5:30 PM

10. Strong partnerships with families ensure seamless home-school connections.

Our philosophy centers on fostering a secure and stimulating environment where children thrive emotionally, socially, and intellectually.

### **1.4 POLICY: LICENSING INFORMATION**

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY 1 – License Number: 46511

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY 2 – License Number: 46605

Accredited Professional Learning Environment

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY 1 – APPLE P5855

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY 2 – APPLE P5868

The Florida Gold Standard

Association of Independent Schools of Florida – Accredited

# SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

## 2. ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

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### **2.1 POLICY: ENROLLMENT PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS**

Enrollment at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY is open to children aged 12 months to 5th grade. Enrollment is granted without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability of the child, or race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, or disability of the parent or guardian.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon the submission of the following documents:

- Completed enrollment application
- Application screening
- Signed fee agreement
- Registration fee payment
- Security- Police Fee
- Tuition deposit
- Immunization records
- Signed Parent Handbook receipt

The **Enrollment Application** and **Fee Agreements** are not contracts guaranteeing service for any specific duration.

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time, with or without cause.

Continued enrollment is contingent upon adherence to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, including the timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents must notify SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY immediately if any information provided during enrollment or afterward changes. Failure to do so may result in disenrollment and forfeiture of any deposit.

### **2.2 POLICY: TUITION, FEES, AND DISCOUNTS**

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY accepts **ACH DEBIT THROUGH THE BANK ONLY**. Receipts will be given for tuition payments made when requested. **NO CASH PAYMENTS** will be accepted. The payment options are as follows: 4 weeks or annually.

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Fee Agreement prior to enrollment of their child in SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

## **TUITION SCHEDULE 2025-2026**

### **TODDLERS (AGES 12 MONTHS – 30 MONTHS)**

1. Registration Fee - \$ 600 (non-refundable: yearly)
2. Security- Police Fee - \$300 (non-refundable: yearly)
3. Tuition Deposit Fee \$550 (per family/ONLY NEW students)

<b>Schedule</b>	<b>4 Week Increment</b>
5 Days – Full days 8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$2300
5 Days – Half days 8:30 am to 1 pm	\$2100
3 Days – Full days 8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$2100

### **PRESCHOOL/VPK (30 MONTHS – 4 YEARS)**

1. Registration Fee - \$ 600 (non-refundable: yearly)
2. Security- Police Fee - \$300 (non-refundable: yearly)
3. Tuition Deposit Fee - \$550 (per family/ONLY NEW students)
4. Book Fee - \$300 (Advanced VPK ONLY)

<b>Schedule</b>	<b>4 Week Increment</b>
5 Days – Full days 8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$2200
5 Days – Half days 8:30 am to 1 pm	\$1900
3 Days – Full days 8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$1900

**VPK PROGRAM WITH THE CERTIFICATE IS \$1900 EVERY 4 WEEKS.**

- Sibling Discount: 10% discount off the lowest tuition for 1<sup>st</sup> child. 5% discount off the lowest tuition for 2<sup>nd</sup> child.
  - Late Tuition: \$70 fee if payment is not received on the scheduled date.
  - Returned Check/ACH: \$70 fee if payment is returned.
  - If you pay for the year, there is a 5% discount on the total amount.
  - A tuition Deposit will be used during the last week of attendance with a written notice provided to SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY at least 30 days in advance of your child's last day.
- ✓ **If notice is NOT received 30 days prior, you will NOT have your tuition deposit returned.**
- ✓ **If you enroll in the FULL-TIME program but leave within the first 6 months since your child's first day of attendance, your tuition deposit will not be returned**

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (KINDERGARTEN – 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE)

1. Registration Fee - \$ 600 (non-refundable: yearly)
2. Security- Police Fee - \$300 (non-refundable: yearly)
3. Book Fees - \$600
4. Tuition Deposit Fee \$1000 (per family/ONLY NEW students)

Schedule	4 Week Increment
Kindergarten (8:00 am to 3:00 pm)	\$2200
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade (8:00 am to 3 pm)	\$2200
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade (7:30 am to 2:30 pm)	\$2200
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade (7:30 am to 2:30 pm)	\$2200
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade (7:30 am to 2:30 pm)	\$2200
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade (7:30 am to 2:30 pm)	\$2200
After school (3:00 pm to 5:30 pm)	\$600

- Sibling Discount: 10% discount off the lowest tuition for 1<sup>st</sup> child. 5% discount off the lowest tuition for 2<sup>nd</sup> child.
  - Late Tuition: \$70 fee if payment is not received on the scheduled date.
  - Returned Check/ACH: \$70 fee if payment is returned.
  - If you pay for the year, there is a 5% discount on the total amount.
  - A tuition Deposit will be used during the last week of attendance with a written notice provided to SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY at least 30 days in advance of your child's last day.
  - New Step-Up families must consult the accountant for guidance on receiving the Step-Up scholarship.
- ✓ **If notice is NOT received 30 days prior, you will NOT have your tuition deposit returned.**
  - ✓ **If you enroll in the FULL-TIME program but leave within the first 6 months since your child's first day of attendance, your tuition deposit will not be returned.**
  - ✓ **Families who do not provide the "Step-Up Award Letter" by August 11 must pay the full tuition amount until the scholarship is received and processed. Tuition will be adjusted accordingly upon reimbursement.**

## SHORT TERM – less than 6 months

1. Registration Fee - \$ 600 (non-refundable: yearly)
2. Security- Police Fee - \$300 (non-refundable: yearly)
3. Book Fees (ONLY Elementary Students) - \$600

**All payments must be made in full. No security deposit is required.**

Schedule	4 Week Increment
Toddlers/ Preschool/VPK - Full days 8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$3000
Toddlers/ Preschool - Half days 8:30 am to 1 pm	\$2800
Kindergarten to 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade - 8:00 am to 3:00 pm	\$3000
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade to 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade - 7:30 am to 2:30 pm	\$3000
After school – 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm	\$600



- Tuition **DOES NOT** include fees for field trips and extracurricular activities such as: Art, Dance, Math, Music, Soccer, Theater, and Tutoring classes.
- Tuition also **DOES NOT** cover any Winter/Holiday Show or Graduation / Mother's Day Show. ACH will not be used for Afterschool activities.

### ACH DEBIT SCHEDULE

<b>ACH DEBIT 8/8/25</b> <b>COVERS:</b> <u>First Day of School</u> 8/11/25 - 8/15/25 8/18/25 - 8/22/25 8/25/25 - 8/29/25 9/01/25 - 9/05/25	<b>ACH DEBIT 9/05/25</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 9/08/25 - 9/12/25 9/15/25 - 9/19/25 9/22/25 - 9/26/25 9/29/25 - 10/03/25	<b>ACH DEBIT 10/03/25</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 10/06/25 - 10/10/25 10/13/25 - 10/17/25 10/20/25 - 10/24/25 10/27/25 - 10/31/25	<b>ACH DEBIT 10/31/25</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 11/03/25 - 11/07/25 11/10/25 - 11/14/25 11/17/25 - 11/21/25 11/24/25 - 11/28/25
<b>ACH DEBIT 11/28/25</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 12/01/25 - 12/05/25 12/08/25 - 12/12/25 12/15/25 - 12/19/25 12/22/25 - 12/26/25	<b>ACH DEBIT 12/26/25</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 12/29/25 - 1/02/26 1/05/26 - 1/09/26 1/12/26 - 1/16/26 1/19/26 - 1/23/26	<b>ACH DEBIT 1/23/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 1/26/26 - 1/30/26 2/02/26 - 2/06/26 2/09/26 - 2/13/26 2/16/26 - 2/20/26	<b>ACH DEBIT 2/20/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 2/23/26 - 2/27/26 3/02/26 - 3/06/26 3/09/26 - 3/13/26 3/16/26 - 3/20/26
<b>ACH DEBIT 3/20/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 3/23/26 - 3/27/26 3/30/26 - 4/03/26 4/06/26 - 4/10/26 4/13/26 - 4/17/26	<b>ACH DEBIT 4/17/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 4/20/26 - 4/24/26 4/27/26 - 5/01/26 5/04/26 - 5/08/26 5/11/26 - 5/15/26	<b>ACH DEBIT 5/15/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 5/18/26 - 5/22/26 5/25/26 - 5/29/26 6/01/26 - 6/05/26 (Last day of school) 6/08/26 - 6/12/26 (Summer Camp)	<b>ACH DEBIT 6/12/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 6/15/26 - 6/19/26 6/22/26 - 6/26/26 6/29/26 - 7/03/26 7/06/26 - 7/10/26
	<b>ACH DEBIT 7/10/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 7/13/26 - 7/17/26 7/20/26 - 7/24/26 7/27/26 - 7/31/26 8/03/26 - 8/07/26	<b>ACH DEBIT 8/07/26</b> <b>COVERS:</b> 8/10/26 - 8/14/26 8/17/26 - 8/21/26 8/24/26 - 8/28/26 8/31/26 - 9/04/26	

There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or closures due to emergencies, inclement weather, or acts of God. Non-payment of tuition may result in immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment.

Parents who anticipate difficulty paying on time should notify the Director immediately. If alternative payment arrangements are approved, parents will be notified by the Director.

**VPK Enrollment:** SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY accepts VPK for 4-year-old programs. Parents of subsidized children must complete all required paperwork on time. They are also required to sign a fee agreement, agreeing to assume responsibility for tuition if they become

ineligible for childcare subsidies. If a child is absent or late more than 10 times, they will be withdrawn from the VPK program, and parents will be responsible for full tuition.

**Sibling Discount:** A discount is offered for multiple children enrolled during the same school year:

- 2nd child: 10% discount
- 3rd child: 5% discount
- 4th child: 5% discount

Discounts apply only when tuition payments are made on time. Full tuition and late fees will apply when payments are late.

**Vacation Policy:** Regular tuition fees are due even if a child is on vacation, as SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY will remain open. Failure to pay regular tuition fees will result in the child's spot being released, with no guarantee of availability upon return.

### **2.3 POLICY: WITHDRAWAL AND SCHEDULE CHANGES**

**30-DAY written notice** is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the proper notice is given, any unused deposit will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged tuition for two additional weeks and will not have their deposit refunded.

The parents and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter school property without prior permission of the Center Director. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center Director if they wish to return to school property following the last day of enrollment at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center Director and are not a right of the withdrawn child or parent.

Parents who wish to change their child's days or times of enrollment at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY must submit a request to do so **two weeks in advance** of the proposed change. Schedule changes are subject to a change in the fee of **additional time added**.

The Center Director will notify the parents if the new schedule is available. A schedule change will not be final until a new fee arrangement is agreed upon. If the schedule change requires an additional deposit and/or registration fee, the change will also be contingent upon payment of these monies. If the requested schedule is not available parents may choose to continue with the current schedule until such time as the requested schedule becomes available or may choose to withdraw their child from the program. Please see the **Enrollment Agreement** for terms and conditions.

## **2.4 POLICY: STEP-UP FOR STUDENTS SCHOLARSHIP POLICY**

Sunshine State Academy requires all families participating in the Step-Up for Students scholarship program to complete the necessary approval process each quarter to ensure the timely distribution of funds.

### **Quarterly Approval Requirement**

Parents must log into the Step-Up for Students Scholarship portal each quarter to verify and approve the scholarship funding for Sunshine State Academy.

Failure to complete this process may delay the distribution of funds, requiring families to pay the full tuition amount until the scholarship funds are received and processed.

### **Award Letter Submission Deadline**

Families who do not submit the Step-Up Award Letter by August 11 must pay the full tuition amount until the scholarship is received and processed. Tuition will be adjusted accordingly upon reimbursement.

To prevent any disruptions or financial burdens, please complete these steps promptly. If you need assistance, contact Sunshine State Academy for guidance.

## SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

### 3. HEALTH AND SAFETY

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#### **3.1 POLICY: PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

To comply with Florida Statutes, Department of Children and Families (DCF), Child Care Licensing, and Department of Education (DOE) regulations, the following pre-enrollment requirements must be met:

1. **Enrollment Packet:** A completed pre-enrollment packet must be submitted to the center before the child's first day of attendance.
2. **Immunization Records:** A current immunization record, as required by Florida law, must be provided. Immunization records must be renewed as per the due dates specified by the healthcare provider or state guidelines. If a child is not immunized, a **State of Florida immunization waiver** must be submitted and renewed as required.
3. **Exemptions:** Immunization exemptions are permitted for medical or religious reasons in accordance with Florida statutes. Parents must provide a **valid waiver** and ensure it is renewed as necessary.
4. **Physical Examination:** A physical examination form, completed and signed up by a licensed healthcare professional, is required. This form must confirm the child's fitness to attend SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY and must be renewed annually or as specified by the healthcare provider.
5. **Non-Immunized Students:** Children without immunizations may be admitted only if a valid Florida waiver is on file and kept current.

Ensuring that all records, including immunization and physical examination forms, are up to date is essential for continued enrollment and adherence to state licensing requirements. Parents will be notified of renewal deadlines to maintain compliance.

#### **3.2 POLICY: SEVERE ALLERGIES AND MEDICATION POLICY**

To ensure the safety and well-being of children with severe allergies, SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY requires the following:

- Parents must provide a signed "**Authorization for Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies**" form at enrollment or when an allergy is discovered. This form, completed by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), must be updated every six months or as needed. Additionally, parents must submit any physician's orders or procedural guidelines for allergy prevention and treatment.
- Parents are also required to sign a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form, which releases SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY from liability for administering emergency treatments. Any medications for allergic reactions must comply with the center's medication policy.

## **Medication Policy**

The SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY does NOT administer over-the-counter medications. Prescription medications will only be dispensed if:

- They are in original, labeled containers.
- Accompanied by a doctor's note specifying dosage and administration instructions.
- A Medication Form is completed daily by the parent or guardian.

Medication Forms are available at the front desk and must be submitted alongside all required documents. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure all prescription medications are labeled by a pharmacist and replaced before their expiration date.

These policies are in place to ensure compliance with state regulations and maintain a safe environment for all children in our care. For further information, please contact the Center Director.

## **3.3 POLICY: COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND ILLNESS POLICY**

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY adheres to health and communicable disease guidelines outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Parents must pick up an ill child within 30 minutes of being notified. If a parent cannot arrive within this time, they must arrange for an authorized emergency contact to pick up the child. If parents cannot be reached, the staff will contact individuals listed on the child's emergency form until arrangements are made.

Children exhibiting symptoms of communicable diseases will be excluded from the program and may return only when they are no longer contagious. A doctor's note confirming that the child is not contagious is required for reentry. SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY reserves the right to refuse a child's return if the Center Director determines the child is too ill to participate.

**Fever Policy:** Children with a fever (99°F or higher under the arm) must remain home until fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. If sent home for a fever, children may not return the following day.

**Diarrhea Policy:** Children experiencing diarrhea (two or more loose stools within 24 hours) must be excluded. They may return 48 hours after normal bowel movements resume.

Parents are asked to notify the Center Director of any absences due to illness. This allows the school to monitor illnesses and inform parents, as needed, of any communicable diseases present. Only relevant disease information will be shared, and all efforts will be made to protect your child's confidentiality.

Disclosure of illness is voluntary, and a parent's decision to share or withhold information about their child's health will not affect their continued enrollment at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY.

These policies are in place to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff. For any questions, please contact the Center Director.

### **3.4 POLICY: BITING**

Biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in classrooms with infants through 2½ years of age. SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY acknowledges that biting incidents can cause concern for parents and works proactively to identify and mitigate triggers for such behavior.

#### **Guidelines for Biting Incidents:**

##### **For Children Under 3 Years Old:**

1. Biting is managed through positive redirection and separation into different activities.
2. The staff does not harshly discipline children for biting but collaborates with parents to develop strategies to address and reduce this behavior.
3. Uncooperative parents may face termination of services.

##### **For Children Over 3 Years Old:**

1. Biting is addressed using the discipline procedures outlined in this handbook.
2. Staff will monitor and evaluate triggers for the behavior.
3. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff in resolving the issue.
4. Any child who bites three times in a school year will be disenrolled for the safety of others.

#### **Parental Notifications:**

- Parents will receive an incident report for each biting incident.
- Staff cannot disclose the identity or medical history of the other child involved, in compliance with confidentiality policies.
- Parents are advised to consult a physician if concerned about potential health risks related to the biting incident.

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY prioritizes the safety and well-being of all children and expects full cooperation from families to manage and resolve biting behavior effectively.

### **3.5 POLICY: FOOD POLICY**

**Meals Provided:** SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY offers breakfast, lunch, and a late afternoon snack as part of the school tuition. All meals are prepared to be healthy and nutritious.

#### **Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions:**

- Parents must provide a doctor's note specifying any food allergies and instructions for treatment in case of an allergic reaction.
- Written notification is required for any dietary restrictions (e.g., lactose intolerance, vegetarian, or gluten-free diets).

#### **Food Safety:**

- Food is never used as a punishment, and children will not be denied meals or snacks due to behavior.
- Teachers may use food as a reward for good behavior or classroom lessons, but these items (e.g., lollipops, candy) will be sent home in the child's cubby or bag.

- Glass containers and aluminum cans are prohibited for safety reasons.
- SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY does not heat food brought from home. Parents must send food in thermoses or containers designed to maintain the desired temperature.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all children, SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY maintains a strict **peanut-free policy**. **NO peanut or peanut-based products** are allowed on school premises, including in packed lunches, snacks, or special treats brought from home. This policy is in place to protect children with peanut allergies, as exposure to peanuts, even in small amounts, can trigger severe allergic reactions. Compliance with this policy is essential to maintaining a safe environment for all children.

This policy ensures a safe, inclusive, and positive approach to food and nutrition while maintaining compliance with health and safety standards.

### **3.6 POLICY: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND DRILLS**

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY conducts monthly fire and emergency evacuation drills to evaluate the effectiveness of safety procedures. Drill dates and times are unannounced to simulate real emergencies effectively.

#### **Procedures During Drills or Emergencies:**

- Parents may not sign children in or out during drills or real emergencies. They must wait in the designated safe zone outside the building until the drill is complete.
- In the event of a real emergency, the Center Director or designee will inform classroom teachers of the need to close the school. Parents waiting to sign in their children will be required to leave with their child. All other parents or emergency contacts will be notified and must pick up children within 30 minutes of receiving the call.

Parents are expected to remain patient during these situations as staff work to ensure the safety of all children. During a real emergency, children will only be released after the Director or designee has accounted for everyone and authorized the release. Cooperation with staff and emergency personnel is essential.

#### **Alternate Safe Location:**

If the administration of SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY or emergency services personnel determine that the childcare facility is unsafe for occupancy, staff and children will be relocated to the designated alternate safe location at the school building across the street. Once all children are assembled safely at this location, staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contacts to arrange for immediate pick-up. Children must be picked up within 30 minutes of receiving the notification call.

These policies are critical for maintaining a safe environment during emergencies. For questions or additional information, please contact the Center Director.

### **3.7 POLICY: FIREARMS AND WEAPONS POLICY**

At SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, the safety and well-being of our children, staff, and visitors is our top priority. To ensure a secure environment for everyone:

- **No Firearms or Weapons Allowed:**

Under **no circumstances** is any person permitted to carry any type of **firearm, ammunition, or weapon** on school property. This applies to staff, parents, visitors, and anyone else on the premises.

- **Immediate Consequences for Violations:**

Violation of this policy will result in **immediate dismissal** from the program. Any individual found in violation will be asked to leave the premises immediately and will no longer be allowed on the property.

This policy is in place to maintain a safe, secure, and peaceful environment for all children, families, and staff at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY.



SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

4. DAILY OPERATIONS

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4.1 POLICY: HOURS OF OPERATION AND SCHOOL CLOSURES

Hours of Operation: SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY operates year-round, Monday through Friday, with the following schedule:

- 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM: Ages 1 year to 5 years old.
- 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM: Kindergarten to 1<sup>st</sup> grade.
- 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM: 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade.
- 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM: After-school program for Kindergarten through 5th grade.

The center is closed on designated school closure days as outlined in the annual school calendar.

Ages Served:

- Year-Round Program: Ages 1 year to 5 years old.
- School Year Program: Kindergarten through 5th grade.

SCHOOL CLOSURE DAYS

Toddlers/Preschool/VPK

- Monday, August 4, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ First Day of School  
for Teachers (**NO STUDENTS**)
- Monday, August 11, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ **First Day of School**
- Monday, September 1, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ Labor Day
- Monday, November 24, 2025 – Friday, November 28, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ Thanksgiving Break
- Monday, December 22, 2025 – Friday, January 2, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Winter Break
- Monday, January 19, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Friday, April 3, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Good Friday/Easter
- Friday, May 15, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ **Last Day of VPK**
- Monday, May 25, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Memorial Day
- Friday, June 5, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Last Day of School
- Monday, June 8, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ First day of Summer Program

Dates are Subject to change without notice.

## SCHOOL CLOSURE DAYS

### Elementary School (Kindergarten - 5th Grade)

Monday, June 9, 2025 – Friday, August 1, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ Summer Camp

Monday, August 4, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ First Day of School for  
Teachers (**NO STUDENTS**)

Monday, August 11, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ **First Day of School**

Monday, September 1, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ Labor Day

Friday, October 3, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Planning Day  
(**NO STUDENTS**)

Monday, November 24, 2025 – Friday, November 28, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ Thanksgiving Break

Monday, December 22, 2025 – Friday, January 2, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Winter Break

Monday, January 19, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Friday, March 13, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Early Release Day  
(Pick up at 12pm/NO Afterschool)

Monday, March 16, 2026 – Friday, March 20, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Spring Break

Friday, April 3, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Good Friday/Easter

Monday, May 25, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Memorial Day

Thursday, June 4, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Last Day of School

Friday, June 5, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Last Day of School for Teachers

Monday, June 8, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_ First day of Summer Camp

**Dates are Subject to change without notice.**

## **4.2 POLICY: EMERGENCY AND WEATHER-RELATED CLOSURES:**

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY adheres to the Broward County School Calendar for emergencies and weather-related closures. Parents will be promptly notified of any closures due to severe weather or other emergency situations. The schedule is designed to provide reliable care and education while maintaining the safety and well-being of all children.

In the event of an emergency closing or inclement weather, parents will be notified via email.

**Mid-Day Closures:** If the school must close during the day, staff will attempt to contact the child's parents to arrange pick-up. If parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts listed on the child's form will be called until arrangements are made.

**Evacuation Procedures:** If evacuation is required, parents or emergency contacts will be informed of the pick-up location during the notification call and should report directly to the alternate location if specified.

### **Tuition Policy for Closures:**

Closures under 60 school days: Tuition will not be refunded or reduced.

Closures exceed 60 school days: Tuition will be reduced in accordance with the billing schedule.

This policy ensures effective communication and maintains the safety of children during emergencies while providing clarity on tuition adjustments.

## **4.3 POLICY: ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

### **Hours of Arrival:**

- **2nd Grade – 5th Grade:** Students must be in class by **8:00 am**.
- **Kindergarten and 1st Grade:** Students must be in class by **8:30 am**.
- **VPK Students:** Students must be in class by **9:00 am**.
- **Preschool:** Students must be in class by **9:30 am**.

Children will not be permitted into the building before the specified times. Upon arrival, staff members will escort children to their designated classrooms, ensuring appropriate supervision in compliance with legal requirements.

**Parent Guidance:** Parents are advised against sneaking out during drop-off. Staff are available to discuss strategies to help children adjust to the arrival routine if needed.

**Medication and Special Instructions:** Parents must adhere to the Medication Policy for any medications required during the day. Special instructions, such as early pick-up arrangements, alternative pick-up person, or health-related concerns, must be:

- Submitted in writing.
- Verbally communicated to the teacher or Center Director.

**Notification of Absence:** Parents are required to notify the center by **8:00 AM** if their child is absent or late.

- Failure to provide notice of absences on **10 occasions** within a school year may result in dismissal from the program.
- For illness-related absences, parents are encouraged to inform the Center Director of the nature of the illness to help monitor potential illnesses at the center while maintaining confidentiality.

This policy ensures a safe, structured, and supportive environment for all children while fostering effective communication between parents and staff.

#### **4.4 POLICY: PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

**General Pick-Up Procedure:** Parents, legal guardians, or person designated to act "in loco parentis" must pick up children promptly according to their scheduled times.

##### **Pick-Up Locations:**

- **Ages 1 year to 5 years:** Pick-up occurs inside the building.
- **Kindergarten through 5th grade:** Pick-up is conducted via the car line.

**Incident/Accident Reports:** If an incident or accident occurs during the day, the authorized pick-up person must sign the report at pick-up. Teachers may provide a brief explanation at that time. For detailed discussions, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting or phone call during non-supervisory hours, such as rest or nap times.

##### **Late Pick-Up**

- A child is considered late if not picked up at their scheduled time:  
 12:00 pm VPK program  
 1:00 pm (1/2-day program)  
 3:00 pm (2nd - 5th Grade)  
 3:15 pm (Kindergarten – 1st Grade)  
 5:30 pm (Full day program/After school program)
- A **\$2.00 per minute late fee** will apply, payable in cash immediately to the director or teacher on duty.
- Services will be terminated if late pick-ups occur **10 times within one school year**, regardless of the reason.

Parents are responsible for ensuring timely pick-up, either personally or by arranging for an Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up person.

##### **Impairment by Drugs/Alcohol**

If a parent or authorized pick-up person appears impaired by drugs or alcohol:

- Staff will delay the individual and contact:
  - The other custodial parent (if applicable).
  - Local police.
  - Child Protective Services (CPS).
- Impaired individuals will not be allowed to leave with the child.

## **Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up**

At enrollment, parents must complete an **Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up Form** listing all individuals authorized to pick up their child.

### **Guidelines:**

- In emergencies, staff will contact parents first. If unavailable, staff will call individuals listed on the form until someone is reached.
- Authorized individuals must present **government-issued photo ID** and/or a password before the child is released.

### **Rights and Responsibilities:**

- Custodial parents, unless restricted by court order, have the automatic right to pick up their child and make changes to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up Form.
- Parents may grant "in loco parentis" status to designated individuals, allowing them to discuss confidential matters about the child, such as behavior or incident reports.

### **Updates to the Form:**

- All changes or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up Form must be submitted in writing, signed, and dated by the custodial parent.

**Denial of Access:** SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY reserves the right to refuse or revoke access to any person on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up Form for policy violations.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all authorized individuals understand and comply with these procedures.

## **Compliance and Safety**

These policies are designed to comply with Florida Statutes, DCF, Child Care Licensing, and DOE regulations, ensuring the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

## SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

### 5. BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT

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#### **5.1 POLICY: PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

At SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, parents are expected to uphold a standard of courtesy, respect, and decency, fostering an environment where children can thrive. Any violation of this code may result in restricted access to school property or disenrollment of the child.

#### **Key Policies:**

##### **1. Language and Behavior:**

- Inappropriate language, including swearing or cursing, is strictly prohibited.
- Parents must address frustration or anger respectfully and refrain from directing offensive language at staff or others.

##### **2. Threats and Safety:**

- Threatening behavior toward staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated and will be reported to authorities.
- Parents are responsible for their child's behavior at all times.

##### **3. Discipline:**

- Corporal punishment or verbal abuse of any child is not permitted.
- Concerns about another child's behavior must be directed to staff, not to the child or their parents.

##### **4. Smoking:** Smoking is prohibited on school property, including the parking lot.

##### **5. Safety Procedures:**

- Parents must adhere to all safety protocols, including secure entry procedures.
- Unauthorized individuals must not be granted access to the premises.

##### **6. Respectful Communication:** Disagreements must be handled calmly and respectfully. Confrontational behavior is strictly prohibited.

##### **7. Confidentiality:** Parents must respect the privacy of all children, families, and staff. Sharing or pressuring confidential information is a violation of policy.

By adhering to this code of conduct, we collectively ensure a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all members of our SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY community.

## **5.2 POLICY: DISCIPLINE**

At SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, we employ a positive, child-centered approach to discipline, focusing on encouraging acceptable behavior within a nurturing and supportive environment. Disruptive behavior is managed calmly and confidently to maintain a harmonious classroom atmosphere.

### **Discipline Steps:**

1. **Positive Redirection:** Staff will guide the child toward appropriate behavior in a constructive and encouraging manner.
2. **Notification of Administration:** If redirection is ineffective, the issue will be escalated to administration for further evaluation.
3. **Parental Involvement:** If the behavior persists, parents will be contacted for a conference to collaborate on strategies for improvement.
4. **Disenrollment:** Continued unacceptable behavior, despite intervention, may result in the child's removal from the program.

This policy ensures a consistent and respectful approach to discipline, prioritizing the well-being and development of all children in the program.

## **5.3 POLICY: MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY employees are legally mandated reporters and must report any suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Staff are not required to notify parents or investigate suspicions before filing a report. Failure to report may result in criminal liability for the mandated reporter.

### **Mandated Reporting Details:**

- Reports are made in good faith and protect the reporter from liability, even if unfounded.
- The Child Protective Services Act prioritizes the welfare and safety of all children.

### **Common Causes for Reporting Include:**

1. Unexplained bruises, marks, or injuries.
2. Inappropriate verbal reprimands or neglectful care.
3. Insufficient or improper clothing.
4. Transport without proper child restraints.
5. Drop-offs or pick-ups by individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
6. Lack of appropriate meals or hydration.
7. Leaving a child unattended.
8. Ignoring the special needs of a disabled child.
9. Sending a sick child to school is medicated to mask symptoms.
10. Behavior indicating an abusive environment.

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY is committed to fulfilling its legal and ethical duty to protect children, always ensuring their safety and well-being.

## **5.4 POLICY: COURT ORDERS AFFECTING ENROLLED CHILDREN**

### **Guidelines for Compliance with Court Orders**

#### **1. Submission of Court Orders:**

Parents must provide a certified copy of the most recent court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) and any amendments. Court orders will be followed strictly unless a custodial parent requests a more liberal variation in writing. For shared/joint custody cases, both parents must sign such a request.

#### **2. Equal Access Without Court Orders:**

In the absence of a court order, both parents will be granted equal access to the child, as per the law. SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY cannot restrict access to one parent based on the request of the other parent without a court order.

#### **3. Conflicting Court Orders:**

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated order will take precedence.

#### **4. Protection from Abuse and Restraining Orders:**

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY will enforce all active Protection from Abuse Orders or Restraining Orders for the duration of their validity. Employees cannot permit violations of these orders and will report any breaches to the appropriate authorities.

### **Important Notes:**

Parents are advised to ensure their child remains in their care until a court order is in place if access by the other parent is a concern. SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY cannot act as an enforcer beyond the scope of the law and court-issued orders.

By adhering to these procedures, SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY ensures compliance with legal requirements while prioritizing the safety and well-being of all children.

## **5.5 POLICY: PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS**

Parents have the legal right to access their child while they are in care at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY. However, to ensure safety and security:

- Parents must be accompanied by a staff member when entering the facility and escorted to the classroom by an administrative team member.
- Parents are not permitted to walk unaccompanied through the hallways or classrooms.

**Visitor Access:** Visitors must schedule appointments with the Director. All visitors will be always accompanied by an employee during their visit.

### **Dismissal Due to Restricted Parent Access:**

- SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY will dismiss any child whose parent is legally prohibited from entering the school property.
- The academy cannot agree to keep a child enrolled if their parents forfeit their access rights, as this would violate legal regulations.



## **5.6 POLICY: DISMISSAL**

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY reserves the right to dismiss a child at any time, with or without cause.

### **Dismissal Process:**

- Teachers will assist the child in gathering belongings and escort them to the foyer to meet their parents.
- Parents are required to leave school property immediately in a calm and respectful manner.

**Disruptive Behavior:** The academy will contact local police if a parent becomes uncooperative or disruptive during dismissal.

**Re-entry Following Dismissal:** Dismissed children and parents must request an appointment with the Center Director to return to school property. Approval is at the discretion of the Director and is not guaranteed.

**Harassment or Threats:** Any form of harassment, threats, or harm toward anyone affiliated with the academy will fully result in prosecution of the law.

**No Tolerance Policy:** SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY has a zero-tolerance policy for unacceptable behavior from either the parent or the child. Immediate removal will occur if behavior is deemed unacceptable.

These policies are in place to ensure a safe, respectful, and secure environment for all children, families, and staff.

## SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

### 6. CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM POLICIES

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#### 6.1 POLICY: CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY's curriculum aligns with the Sunshine State Standards and is based on the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt-approved framework. It fosters multilingual abilities, cognitive growth, and skill development across key areas: Math, Reading, Writing, Science, Social Studies, Art, Literacy, and Physical Education.

##### **Key Practices:**

##### **1. Individualized Learning:**

- Tailored to each child's pace and style using hands-on, age-appropriate materials.
- Encourages higher-order thinking and responsibility for actions.

##### **2. Research-Based Approaches:**

- Vygotsky's scaffolding: Adapts instruction to performance levels.
- Piaget's child-centered exploration: Promotes learning through discovery.

##### **3. Collaborative Strategies:**

- Facilitated classroom discussions for peer learning.
- Regular formative assessments to track progress.

##### **4. Parent Communication:**

- Daily updates via PROCARE, including activities, photos, and videos.
- Bi-annual parent-teacher conferences (Fall and Spring).

#### 6.2 POLICY: GRADUATION

It is the policy of **Broward County Schools**, not SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, that children are advanced to the next age group as follows:

- **1 year old on or before September 1, 2024:** Grouped 1–2 years old (Sept 2024–Sept 2025).
- **2 years old on or before September 1, 2024:** Grouped 2–3 years old (Sept 2024–Sept 2025).
- **3 years old on or before September 1, 2024:** Grouped 3–4 years old (Sept 2024–Sept 2025).
- **4 years old on or before September 1, 2024:** Grouped 4–5 years old (Sept 2024–Sept 2025).
- **5 years old on or before September 1, 2024:** Grouped 5–6 years old (Sept 2024–Sept 2025).
- **6 years old on or before September 1, 2024:** Grouped 6–7 years old (Sept 2024–Sept 2025).

This policy ensures children are placed in classes that align with their social and emotional readiness. SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY adheres strictly to this policy, and no exceptions or negotiations will be made.

Parents are reminded that emotional and social development is equally as important as academic readiness when considering class placement.

### **6.3 POLICY: STAFF-TO-CHILD RATIOS AND REST TIME**

- Children aged 12 to 23 months: 1 to 6
- Children aged 24 to 35 months: 1 to 11
- Children aged 36 to 47 months: 1 to 15
- Children aged 48 months to 59 months: 1 to 20
- Children aged 60 months (5 years old) or older: 1 to 25

**Rest Time:** Children under the age of 5 (kindergarten) will have rest time from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm each day.

**Educational/Personal Care Supplies Needed:** For napping children, a small sleeping bag (that fits inside a large Ziploc bag) should be provided. Please do not send large blankets with pillows due to limited storage space. Diapers, creams, and wipes are required as needed.

### **6.4 POLICY: STUDENT COMPUTER REQUIREMENT POLICY**

All 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to have a **personal laptop**, while **Kindergarten students** must have a **personal iPad** that meets or exceeds the specified minimum system requirements.

**Laptops / iPad will be used for:**

- Accessing and downloading various online curriculum resources
- Generating documents and presentations
- Taking exams
- Participating in remote educational activities

**Laptop Minimum System Requirements (1<sup>ST</sup> – 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE):**

- Processor: Intel® Core™ i3-100U Processor or better
- Operating System: Windows 11 Home
- Memory: 8 GB or higher
- Storage: 256 GB or higher
- Camera: 720P or higher
- Connectivity: Wi-Fi 6 (2x2 AX) & Bluetooth® 5.1 or above

**Examples of Recommended Models (1<sup>ST</sup> – 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE):**

- **Lenovo IdeaPad Slim 3i**

<https://www.lenovo.com/us/en/p/laptops/ideapad/ideapad-300/lenovo-ideapad-slim-3i-gen-9-15-inch-intel/83e60001us>

- **Dell Inspiron 15**

[https://www.dell.com/en-us/shop/dell-laptops/inspiron-15-laptop/spd/inspiron-15-3520-laptop/?\\_gl=1\\*hvm60o\\*\\_up\\*MQ.&gclid=c6071cb8b7e1195044e07b2a33f4c529&gclsrc=3p.ds](https://www.dell.com/en-us/shop/dell-laptops/inspiron-15-laptop/spd/inspiron-15-3520-laptop/?_gl=1*hvm60o*_up*MQ.&gclid=c6071cb8b7e1195044e07b2a33f4c529&gclsrc=3p.ds)

**Examples of Recommended Model (KINDERGARTEN)**

- **Apple iPad (9th Generation): 64GB, Wi-Fi or better**

<https://a.co/d/ekQvQXk>

## **6.5 POLICY: BIRTHDAY AND HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS**

### **Party Celebration Time:**

- Toddlers and Preschool: 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm
- Elementary: Must contact the lead administrator for specific timing.

**Allowed Items:** ONLY Vanilla cupcakes, apple juice, party hats, plates, and napkins.

### **Additional Guidelines:**

The celebration time for toddlers and preschoolers is set in the afternoon to align with their schedule.

For the safety and well-being of all students, **NO NUTS** are allowed in any party treats. If there are any specific dietary requirements, the front desk must be informed before the celebration day.

**Note:** Holiday celebrations may follow similar guidelines, with specific arrangements and times determined based on the type of holiday and class schedule.

## **6.6 POLICY: FIELD TRIPS**

### **Field Trips**

All parents are required to sign a permission slip for each field trip their child will attend.

- **VPK and Elementary students** participate in field trips.
- **Toddlers and Preschool children** do not leave the school and participate in in-house field trips.
- **Transportation** for field trips is provided via a licensed school bus.

## **6.7 POLICY: TELEVISION POLICY**

At SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, we prioritize active learning and creative engagement throughout the day. Below are the details of our television and video viewing policy.

Children are not permitted to watch television during regular school hours, which are from **7:30 am to 5:00 pm**. This ensures that children are engaged in hands-on activities, learning, and social interactions during their time at school. The television is turned on at 5:00 pm during dismissal time. This is a transitional period for children as they prepare to go home.

### **Educational Video Programs:**

All video programs shown are educational and are carefully selected. They align with the monthly theme and are included in the Lesson Plans for each class. This ensures that the content is relevant and supports the children's learning.

We aim to foster a balanced learning environment where screen time is used purposefully and in a way that supports educational objectives.

## **6.8 POLICY: TOYS FROM HOME**

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring toys from home unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child follows this policy. If a child is having difficulty with this policy, parents are encouraged to consult with the classroom teacher. If parents repeatedly fail to enforce this policy, the staff will contact them and require that they come to the school to remove the toy.

**Nap/Rest Time Exception:** Children in classrooms with nap/rest time may bring one plush/non-musical toy with their bedding supplies. This toy is to be used only during nap/rest time and must be placed with the bedding.

**Toy Inspection:** All toys brought for curriculum purposes or nap/rest time will be inspected by SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY staff for safety and appropriateness. Toys may be prohibited at the discretion of the academy.

**Responsibility:** SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen toys that should not have been brought to school.

## **6.9 POLICY: DRESS CODE**

### **Children's Clothing:**

**Every child is required to wear a full uniform.** Children will not be accepted into the school if they are not wearing a uniform with closed-toed shoes. Children will be asked to remove any items that are not part of the uniform.

A **school uniform** includes:

- Navy blue, light blue, or red uniform shirt (depending on the grade).
- Navy blue/khaki pants, shorts, or skorts with white socks. **NO leggings, jeans, tutus, or tights** are permitted.
- Navy blue or red uniform jacket (depending on the grade).

**Shoes:** Children are not permitted to wear open-toed or open-backed shoes, such as Crocs, sandals, or flip-flops. Rubber-soled sneakers or tennis shoes are most appropriate for school activities. Sandals with socks are not considered closed-toed shoes.

### **Where to Purchase the Uniform**

Uniforms can be purchased at: **Aventura Kids**

- Address: 19090 West Dixie Hwy, Aventura, Florida 33180
- Phone: (305) 405-6100



### **Clothing Requirements for Children:**

- **Ages 3-5:** One seasonally and size-appropriate complete change of clothing must be always kept at the center.
- **Under age 3:** Two seasonal and size-appropriate complete changes of clothing are required.
- A complete change of clothing includes a shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes.
- Teachers will post reminders for parents to update their clothing as the weather changes.
- All clothing items must be **clearly labeled** with the child's first and last name.
- SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY is **not responsible** for lost or damaged clothing items.

### **Jewelry/Accessories for Children:**

- Children are **not permitted to wear jewelry** of any kind as it is a safety hazard for both the child and others.
- SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY is **not responsible** for lost or stolen jewelry or valuables.
- Hair beads, barrettes, bobby pins, and similar accessories are prohibited due to safety concerns. Parents should be mindful of potential safety hazards when choosing accessories for their children.
- If a child wears jewelry, parents will be required to remove it or take it home.

### **Parents' Dress Code:**

Parents must be dressed in **appropriate clothing** while at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY or at any academy-sponsored event.

- **Inappropriate clothing includes:**
  - Revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn clothing (in inappropriate places), or see-through garments.
  - Clothing with suggestive or vulgar language.
- **Shoes:** Parents wearing high heels, work boots, or shoes with wet/dirty soles must remove their shoes before entering classrooms with children under 2 ½ years old to prevent injury and maintain a clean floor. Shoes should be left outside the classroom door.

### **Jewelry for Parents:**

- Parents volunteering in the classroom or at academy events are **not permitted to wear jewelry or accessories** as per the children's/staff's dress code policy.
- Parents who do not comply with this policy will be restricted from volunteering.

## SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

### 7. POLICIES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

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#### **7.1 POLICY: CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

Confidentiality and the protection of sensitive information are fundamental principles at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY. The following guidelines outline how we handle and protect confidential information.

##### **Internal Confidentiality**

- **Sharing Information:** Confidential information is shared only with employees who have a direct "need to know" to provide appropriate and safe care for your child.
- **Protected Information Includes:**
  - Names, addresses, phone numbers
  - Disability information
  - Health-related details, including HIV/AIDS status

Confidential details about faculty, parents, or other children will not be disclosed to ensure everyone's right to privacy.

##### **External Confidentiality**

- **Information Sharing Outside the Academy:** Confidential information about a child will be shared externally only with written parental consent, unless required by law.
- **Consent Documentation:** Parents will be informed in writing of the specific information to be shared, the recipient, and the purpose of sharing.

##### **Violation of Confidentiality**

**Consequences:** Parents who violate the Confidentiality Policy will lose access to school property. Violations may result in the dis-enrollment of their child in accordance with the Parent's Right to Immediate Access policy.

##### **Observing Other Children**

Parents may observe children, including those with disabilities or challenging behaviors (e.g., biting, hitting, spitting). However, SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY's employees are strictly prohibited from discussing another child's personal information to protect their privacy.

At SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, we are committed to safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals, ensuring a respectful and secure environment for everyone.

#### **7.2 POLICY: PHOTO / VIDEO AND MEDIA RELEASE**

At SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY, capturing and sharing moments of your child's growth and engagement in various activities is a valued part of our community. Below are the details regarding our photo and media release policy:

## **Use of Photos and Videos**

- Purpose of Photos: Staff members at SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY take photos and videos of children throughout the year to document and share the various activities in which children participate.
- Privacy Assurance: Children's names will not be used in photos or videos displayed outside of SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY.

## **Media Platforms**

Photos and videos may be used on the following platforms: SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY website, Facebook, Instagram, and other social media sites

## **Opt-Out Option**

If parents or guardians do **not** allow the use of their child's photos or videos, they must provide a written notice to SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY. This opt-out notice will ensure that the child's image is not used on any media platform or external displays. The school will respect and strictly adhere to the preferences expressed by parents or guardians in this regard.

This policy ensures we celebrate the children's experiences while maintaining their safety, privacy, and the preferences of their families.



## SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

### 8. COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

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#### 8.1 POLICY: PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY values open communication between parents and teachers to support each child's growth and development.

##### **Scheduled Conferences:**

- **Fall Conference:** Provides an early assessment of your child's progress and areas of focus.
- **Spring Conference:** Offers a comprehensive review of your child's development and achievements throughout the year.

##### **Additional Conferences:**

Parents are welcome to request additional conferences if needed. To schedule, please contact the office. Meetings will be arranged at a mutually convenient time to address any concerns or questions about your child's progress.

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY is committed to fostering a strong partnership with parents to ensure the success and well-being of every child.

#### 8.3 POLICY: PRO CARE APPLICATION

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY uses the **Pro Care App** to keep parents updated:

- **Daily Reports:** Receive a detailed report each day about your child's activities and progress.
- **Photos:** Expect 2–3 individual photos of your child per week through the app.

**Group Photos:** Occasionally, group photos are shared with all parents whose children are included.

- If you prefer your child not to appear in group photos, please notify us to accommodate your preference.

We value communication and respect your preferences regarding your child's updates.

#### 8.3 POLICY: INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTING

##### **Reporting and Documentation**

If your child is involved in an incident or accident during the school day:

1. A staff member will complete an **Incident/Accident Report**.
2. The report will be provided to you at the end of the day.

3. Parents or designated guardians ("in loco parentis") must sign the report at pick-up, and a copy will be given for your records.

### **Follow-Up Procedures**

- **Brief Discussions:** The classroom teacher may provide a brief overview of the incident during pick-up.
- **In-Depth Discussions:** If a detailed discussion is required, a meeting or telephone conference should be scheduled for a later time. Meetings may take place during nap/rest time or at another agreed-upon time.

### **Alternate Pick-Up Procedures**

If someone other than a parent or guardian picks up the child:

The parent or guardian must sign the Incident/Accident Report and return it to the center director within **24 hours**. Failure to return the signed report within the required timeframe will result in the child's exclusion from the program until the report is returned.

This policy ensures prompt communication about incidents and maintains accountability while allowing staff to focus on the care and safety of all children.

## **8.4 POLICY: PARENT PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEERS**

Parents are invited and encouraged to participate in their child's school activities. There are many ways in which parents can engage and volunteer at the childcare center.

- Any parent volunteering in the classroom regularly must secure criminal background checks and fingerprints as required by licensing regulations.
- Individuals with felony convictions, sex offender convictions, or open investigations into criminal activities are prohibited from volunteering in the classroom or on field trips.
- Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days they have custody as per the court order. For example, a parent with custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays may only volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation-only (sole/exclusive custody) will need written permission from the custodial parent to volunteer.

SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY reserves the right to assign volunteer roles. We do not guarantee that volunteering parents will be assigned to locations where their child(ren) is present.

## SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

### 9. POLICY: STAFF EMPLOYMENT BY CLIENTS

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The staff of SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY is prohibited from being employed by any client (current or former).

Parents, or anyone acting on their behalf, are **not permitted** to solicit, induce, recruit, or encourage any staff member of SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY to leave their employment for any reason, either directly or indirectly.

**Consequences for Breach:** Parents who employ SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY staff will have their services **terminated**, and any deposits made will be **forfeited**. If a parent fails to comply with this policy, they will be required to pay a **liquidated damages fee** of \$20,000.00 (twenty thousand U.S. dollars) for each breach of this policy.

**Staff Employment with Clients:** Staff members who become employed by current or former clients of SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY will have their employment with SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY **terminated**.

**Employment Definition:** Employment refers to any relationship outside of the school's services involving an employee of SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY interacting with a current or former client. This includes, but is not limited to, services such as babysitting, house sitting, mother's helper, nanny services, and carpooling, whether voluntary or paid.

## SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

### 10. POLICY: SCHOLL CONTACT INFORMATION

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#### SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY

1801 Plunkett Street  
Hollywood, FL 33020  
954-736-9000  
Fax Number: 954-404-9275

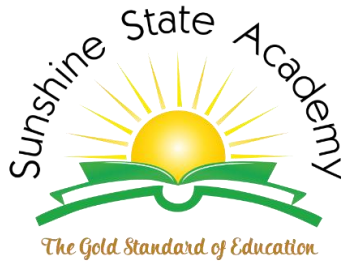
#### SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY 2

1308 S Federal Highway Hollywood, FL 33020  
954-736-9000  
Fax Number: 954-362-4447

Email: [sunshine@sunshinestateacademy.com](mailto:sunshine@sunshinestateacademy.com)

Website: [www.sunshinestateacademy.com](http://www.sunshinestateacademy.com)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/sunshinestateacademyhollywood/>



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_ the parent/legal guardian of (child/children's names) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
acknowledge that I/We have received a copy of the SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY's Parent Handbook and have been given the opportunity to read the manual and ask questions about and understand the policies contained therein. Furthermore, I/WE agree to abide by the policies set forth in the manual.

I/WE understand the policies described in the Parent Handbook are not conditions of enrollment, and the language does not create a contract between SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY and the parents. SUNSHINE STATE ACADEMY reserves the right to alter, amend or otherwise modify these guidelines in its sole discretion, without prior notice.

**Parent / Legal guardian's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent / Legal guardian's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_