

PURPOSE, PHILOSOPHY, AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

Miss Amy's LLC Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>COVID-19 UPDATES AND POLICY REGARDING COVID-19</u>	<u>4-5</u>
<u>BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>SAFETY RULES FOR CHILDREN & STAFF</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>EMERGENCY PLAN</u>	<u>7-9</u>
<u>FEES & HOLIDAYS LINES OF AUTHORITY</u>	<u>9-13</u>
<u>SCHEDULING & PRICING FOR MUSIC TOGETHER</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u>	<u>14-16</u>
<u>POLICY ON ILLNESS</u>	<u>16-18</u>

INTRODUCTION

Miss Amy's Child Care was established in August of 1992.

The purpose of Miss Amy's is to offer parents a preschool program that will aid in the development of their young children by providing a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment.

We believe that a child's early years provide a foundation for growth and development for the rest of his/her life. In order to help our children develop to their fullest potential, we believe an environment must be created that encourages a child's curiosity about the world. The environment should provide opportunities to think creatively to make decisions and choices within appropriate limits.

As children grow, they go through an orderly series of developmental stages that are basically the same for all children. The rate at which children progress through these stages can vary dramatically from one child to another. Our program is based on the philosophy that each child is an individual who develops at his/her own pace. Our program is based on the staff's training and study of several early childhood theories. These include: The Reggio Emilia Approach, Montessori, and Developmentally Appropriate Learning Centers.

Above all, we believe that a child should be in an environment where love and respect are shown for each child as an individual, and where all children learn to love and respect themselves and each other.

In order to maintain consistent care of children in care we do the following: When new staff are hired they spend a minimum of 2 weeks working alongside another teacher or the director or assistant director. After a 2 week period the director assesses whether the staff member is ready to be on their own with the children or if more training time is needed. This depends on the level of knowledge new staff have of early childhood education, as well as the staff members own abilities. Enrolled children are placed with a classroom based on age, prior to attendance parents are told who their child's teacher will be and in which group they will be assigned. Children are with their assigned teacher most of each day. During the first hour and last hour of attendance, they may be with a different teacher or aide, however we strive to have it be the same person each day. There are teachers and aides that work either with the upstairs or downstairs children, but rarely with both, with the exception of the director who may work with any group of children at any time, often substituting for teacher and aides when they are absent. Thus allowing us to maintain the required staff to child ratio each day for each age group. We have part time aides that are here primarily to work when teachers and other aides have breaks in order to maintain this consistent ratio. In the event that we are not able to open a classroom due to illness or absence of

staff, parents will be notified as soon as possible via our Wonderschool APP and also by Email. Every effort will be made to prevent this from happening. However during the COVID 19 pandemic this is sometimes the case, and cannot be prevented.

The services offered will provide an appropriate environment for the development of the physical, language, social emotional, cognitive, and creative skills. The curriculum includes opportunities for painting, water play, sand play, and children reading and being read to, learning colors, number, and alphabet, dramatic play, singing and dancing, music classes, messy/sensory play, block play, science and stem activities. Children are encouraged to play both in groups and individually. There is no 'Screen Time' here at Miss Amy's. Through our interactions with children, the staff strives to foster age-appropriate independence and enhance a healthy self-concept in the children. The program will be offered during the weekdays. Services will be provided on both a full-time and part-time basis. Operating hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Miss Amy's is licensed to serve children from age 22 months thru age 5. We offer a morning snack, a drink with your packed lunch from home and an afternoon snack. Snacks meet or exceed the USDA guidelines.

Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to be active participants in their children's preschool experience.

COVID-19 UPDATES TO PARENT HANDBOOK

Parents are asked to sign that all of the current COVID-19 questions have been answered to the best of their ability each morning at drop off. Staff are responsible for signing children in and out each day on our sign-in record.

Parents are also asked to use the Wonderschool code provided each day to sign their children in and out electronically.

Please read the following updated COVID-19 policy for exposure and/or illness. This may affect our operating status if there is a known case in our center or with one of our families.

- If children, staff, or parents develop COVID-19 symptoms, it is required that we follow the guidance of the CDC, VDH, and other state and local officials.

- Staff and children will have their temperatures taken upon arrival each morning. Anyone who has a fever of 100.4 or higher, will be sent home.
- Staff or children with a fever of 100.4 or higher, cough, shortness of breath and are not vaccinated will need to stay home until they have been without symptoms for 24 hours and have a negative COVID test.
- Any child who is exposed to COVID 19 must quarantine unless they are able to participate in the Test To Stay program.
- We are participating in the **TEST TO STAY** program for older 3's and and four year old classes. This allows children to continue to come to Miss Amy's even after an exposure as long as they remain symptom free and have a negative test each day for 5 days. They must also wear a cloth face covering at all times for 10 days following exposure except when eating, drinking, or sleeping.
- We do request that only staff and children are in the building each day to reduce the potential for exposure to COVID, However if a parent requests entrance then that must be granted.
- In the event we must temporarily close due to an exposure to COVID-19 the following will apply:
- Any closure that requires us to close for more than 10 days will result in a change in tuition. We will revert to the reserve only model which is \$46.00 per week per child. If your child gets exposed to COVID at Miss Amy's then a refund of all tuition paid, with the exception of the \$46.00 reserve fee will be given. Refunds will come in the form of a paper check.

These guidelines will be in place until further notice.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY

Positive guidance and discipline are a positive teaching and learning process that lets children develop responsibility for them as they grow towards becoming more independent and self – reliant. Inappropriate behavior is dealt with first through positive guidance, a process that includes:

- Accepting and expecting behavior that is appropriate to the child's developmental level.
- Helping children to use words and appropriate behaviors to express their feelings.
- Learning simple techniques for resolving conflicts.
- Directing or redirecting children to appropriate activities and behaviors in a positive way.
- Setting limits that are clear, fair, consistent, appropriate, and understandable.

At no time will physical punishment or verbal abuse be used as a behavior management tool. Our Staff are expressly prohibited from using unproductive or shaming methods of punishment. When a child has a physical or emotional outburst, he/she is to be given comfort, privacy and time to calm down and re-group by being separated briefly from the group. Staff will avoid using words like "time out" and will instead use positive statements like, "Do you need to be by yourself for a while? This seems to be hard for you right now; can I help you find something else to do?" Parents and staff must work together to deal with persistent behavioral issues such as biting, or unusual dangerous aggression to self and others. All Staff receive 10 hours of pre-service training provided by the VDSS. This training includes topics on abusive head trauma, child abuse and neglect, shaken baby syndrome, consistency of care, to name a few.

SAFETY RULES FOR CHILDREN AND STAFF

Teachers will inform children about common dangers. We will use words that are simple enough for them to understand and we will repeat the rules often. Our safety rules include the following:

1. Such things as scissors must be handled with care. They must be carried with the pointed end turned down and the handle pointed away from the body. They must always be put away immediately after use.
2. Sharp objects, small objects, rocks, sticks, toys and other such items should be kept out of the mouth.
3. Playground equipment should be used with care. We explain to children that these rules are to prevent them from getting hurt or from hurting someone else.
4. Playground gates must remain **locked** while any children are on the playground. **Only adults** will be allowed to open the gates.
5. Children wearing clothing that has dangling strings or cords or scarves need to have these tucked in, to prevent strangulation.
6. Perishable food should **not** be left unrefrigerated for more than 45 minutes. **If your child brings a lunch without an ice pack that contains perishable food please let the teacher know.**
7. Accidental spills or accidents in the bathroom are cleaned up immediately.
8. Cleaning supplies, insecticides, poisons, hazardous materials, and any other potentially dangerous substances must be kept in a locked cabinet out of reach of children.
9. Keep a clear path to all exits at all times.

10. Immediately report any loitering, strangers, or unauthorized use of property to the director or her designee.
11. Any person who arrives to pick up a child that the teacher has not met before will need to show I.D. and the child's record will need to be checked for parental authorization. If none is listed in the Child's record then the parent will be called before the child will be allowed to leave.
12. All electrical outlets that are not in use need to have an outlet cover on them. Children must never be allowed to tamper with electrical outlets.

EMERGENCY PLAN FOR

1. RESPONSIBILITY

A. School

The school will retain responsibility of all children on premises until they are released to a parent, guardian, or other designated person, or until they have been transported to an official evacuation center, in which case selected staff will remain with the children until all have been reunited with their families.

B. Employee

All employees will remain on the premises as service workers, as designated by law. Such employees will be subject to whatever tasks are assigned by the person or persons in charge and may not leave the premises until the same person or persons give them official permission to do so.

C. Parents

Parents should not telephone the school. They should listen to the radio for progress reports on whatever disaster is taking place. Follow official instructions as relayed by officials via the radio. If parents are able to reach the school without danger to themselves or without interference with disaster workers, they should come to pick up their children. Children will be released only to parents, guardians, or other designated persons known to them or to their parents or guardians.

The following is our Emergency Preparedness Plan, which is on file with the Washington County Department of Emergency Services. This plan is based on a possible scenario for our location:

Sounding of Alarm for train derailment, chemical spills, terrorism, bomb threat or weather-related emergency. We also are now required to do annual Lockdown

drills. 10/13/2021. The director or person in charge shall, in a loud and clear voice, verbally announce to each group, a warning message "This is an emergency situation" all employees and children are to report to the designated shelter in place or evacuation area for their classroom. The local authorities will be contacted if not by landline then by cell phone to find out the best plan of action to take. Evacuate or Shelter-In-Place or Lockdown.

Emergency communication

- Emergency Officer - Amy Bowie (276)676-3151 missamys@mail.com
- Emergency Back-up Officer – Micha Horton (276)676-3151

Notification of Authorities

The Emergency officer will contact the local authorities and the parents of children in care in the event of an emergency. If the Emergency officer is not available then the Back-up officer will notify the local authorities and the parents of children in care. In the event that the Emergency officer or the Back-up officer is not available then the program leader in charge will notify local authorities and parents.

Communication Tools

If in working order the landline will be used to contact authorities. In the event that the landline is out of order then the Center's cell phone will be used.

Evacuation Procedures

Children will be assembled in the classroom downstairs with the swing for a head count. If it is determined that it is safe for the children to exit the building, we will walk to the Abingdon Information Center with them and await transportation there to a shelter or for parent pick-up.

Securing Essential Documents

The Director or person in charge will be responsible for gathering the sign in sheets and the parent contact information as well as the first aid kit and any emergency medication needed for the children in care.

Method of Communication

After evacuation, we will use the Center's cell phone to communicate with local authorities and parents of children in care.

Shelter-In-Place and Intruder

In the event of a weather-related emergency or an intruder, the children will be assembled in the downstairs classroom with the swing and a head count will be done. Local emergency officials will be able to access us through either of our exterior doors.

Essential Documents

Sign in records and parent contact information will be gathered by the Director or the person in charge and taken to the far-left hand corner of the lower level. Medication supplies will also be stored in this area.

Facility Containment

All doors and windows will be closed.

Staff Training

At least two staff members will be trained in First Aid and CPR, they will also receive "In House" training on Emergency Preparedness with an annual refresher. There will be a monthly evacuation drill with a semi-annual Evacuation and Shelter in Place Drill. Our Emergency Plan will be evaluated annually and updated as needed.

Special Procedures

Local authorities will be notified that we do not have our own mode of transporting all of the children in care and will need assistance with this in the event of an evacuation. As an additional resource, we have on file an Emergency Plan Template for a Child Care Facility.

Covid Guidelines for Emergency Shelter in Place or Evacuation Procedures

Due to guidelines, children in different groups cannot be together, so the following are steps to follow until COVID guidelines change:

Downstairs children will assemble in the far right corner of the downstairs classroom without windows. The teacher in charge will be the lead teacher and will assume responsibility for carrying out the shelter in place, evacuation or lockdown plan.

Upstairs children will assemble in the hallway where the children's bathrooms are located. The teacher in charge will be the Pre-K teacher.

FEES & HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

1. Hours of Operation

Miss Amy's is open Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Extended hours, beginning at 7:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm are available for an additional fee (per child). Any parent/caregiver arriving after 6:00 pm must pay a \$25.00 'after hours' late fee. This fee will be collected when you come to pick up your child. In the event that your child is not picked up and your emergency contact person cannot be reached, the appropriate local authorities will be contacted.

2. Holiday Closings

Miss Amy's is closed on the following holidays; Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following, the entire week of Christmas, New years' eve and New years' day, Good Friday and Memorial Day. Payment is based on enrollment not on attendance and is still due whether your child is in attendance or not.

3. Discounts- *Full time, full day enrolled families only*

- A multiple child discount will apply to full time/full day children with more than one child attending. The discount will be \$10.00 per week (per family).

4. Registration fees are due upon registration – *Actual 'dates' of our semester schedule coincide with Washington County Public School's calendar*

- Our school semester begins in August and runs through May. The annual non-refundable registration fee for our school is due upon registering. The fee is as follows: **\$50.00** for each family.
- Our summer program is for June and July. The summer non-refundable registration fee for our school is due upon registering. The fee is as follows: **\$35.00** for each family.
- If you are enrolled and your attendance days extend into the upcoming semester; you are responsible for half of that semester's registration fee because you will be attending during the days of that semester. Example: If the semester ends on May 28 and your child attends two weeks into June. Or if the semester ends Aug 15 and your child attends thru Aug 24. You will be charged for half of the registration fee for every semester your child is in attendance (Aug-May or June-July) according to the dates of the semesters set by Miss Amy's LLC each year.

5. Payment information

- Payments will be set up through the Wonderschool app to draft on a weekly basis.

- Delinquent accounts will result in the termination of your enrollment agreement.
- **There will be no days allowed without payment whether your child attends or not. Teachers must be paid regardless of your child's attendance.**
- Questions regarding your account can be directed to Miss Amy email missamys@mail.com or phone 276-676-3151
- Only accounts in good standing will have priority scheduling
- *Inability to pay your account will result in termination of your enrollment.*

6. **School Closing Policy:** WEATHER RELATED

Miss Amy's will only close in the case of very severe weather or hazardous road conditions. This will be the decision of the director. All usual early arrivals will be telephoned as soon as a determination is made. If in question please call the school. We primarily send notices out via the Wonderschool App and email, so please make sure that you have provided us a valid email address and that you check it often for not only closings but other pertinent information. Payment isn't based on attendance and is still required for weather related closings, as well as closings due to illness outbreak, and utility (water/power) outages.

Miss Amy's Lines of Authority are as follows:

Amy Bowie - Owner/Program Director

Micha Horton - Assistant Director/ Young 3's teacher

Sydney Boyd - Pre - K Teacher

Jasmine Montgomery - Older 3's Teacher/Music Teacher

Lauren Houser - 2's Teacher

Annie Ford - Art Teacher/ Substitute Teacher

Alicia Doss - Downstairs Aide

Sharon Osborne - Upstairs Aide

Brittney Ramsey - Upstairs Aide/Substitute Teacher

SCHEDULING & PRICING FOR MUSIC TOGETHER

MUSIC TOGETHER

We are very fortunate to be able to provide Music Together as a part of our curriculum. Classes take place here at Miss Amy's by a certified Music Together instructor. We are a licensed Music Together Pre-School.

Music Together classes are currently scheduled on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday. Your child will have one class per week. Your child's teacher will let you know the day and time that your child attends Music class.

All Music Together classes are scheduled in the morning hours.

Should a child be out of school and miss their scheduled class; every effort will be made to include them in one of the other classes for that week.

The tuition for Music Together is already rolled into your total tuition price paid weekly. There is a \$40 annual Music Together fee in the Fall to purchase materials for the upcoming year of classes.

The music class days are subject to change on any given semester depending on the instructor's availability. If there is a change, it will likely not occur mid-semester if at all possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parking Guidelines

Parents and guardians of children who attend Miss Amy's are asked to park either in the parking lot in front of our building or in the lower parking lot outside the entrance on the lower level. The office-building parking lot next door to us is not for our use. We also ask that no one block the drive that separates our building from the building next door as this is a shared alley. Please be sure you instruct anyone who picks up your child as to our parking guidelines. Please be mindful that parking is limited and other parents may be needing to park as well, so try and make 'pick-ups & drop-offs' as smooth and swift as feasible.

Dress Code

Play clothes and tennis shoes are strongly recommended. We do go outside every day that the weather permits. We encourage the children to dig in the dirt and sand. Dress clothes often get in the way of active play. Please be sure that jackets and coats do not have dangling strings, as these can get caught on playground equipment and cause strangulation. Please keep in mind that we do play outside, even in cold weather. Please be sure your child has warm clothing.

Sign In/Out:

- **Please be sure your child is signed in each day** using the Wonderschool APP. This is our record of each child's daily attendance and is also used in cases of an emergency. On time arrival is of the utmost importance each day.
 - Also, make sure that if someone other than you should drop off or pick up your child that they know how to sign your child in/out, using the Wonderschool App
- **Do not bring your child after 9:15 am unless you have made prior arrangements.** By enrolling in our pre-school, participation in our curriculum is expected. If your child arrives late that shows a lack of participation and he/she will be missing out on aspects of our program that will better prepare them for school readiness. Tardiness is a disruption not only to your child's schedule but also to the other children in the class as well as the teacher in that classroom.
 - Each child will be allowed a maximum of **10 tardies** per school year August - May.
 - After **5 tardies** a meeting will be requested by the director, at which time an action plan will be agreed upon between the family and the Director.

Communication

Miss Amy's encourages open lines of communication between parents and teachers. We feel this is essential to the success of our program.

- In the younger classrooms, journals are kept on each child to mark their progress throughout the year.
- In the older classrooms, journal style weekly updates are done via the Wonderschool platform.
- Please rely on daily communication with your child's teacher.
- Daily communication can and will be used through the Wonderschool App each day for all classes.
- Parents, guardians, and teachers may request conferences any time during the year. There will be two scheduled parent/teacher conferences each year, in accordance with 22 VAC 15-30-490 section E 3.

Lunch

Miss Amy's does not provide lunch. Lunch must be brought from home. The minimum standards for Child Care Centers #22 VAC 15-30-620 read as follows:

When food is brought from home, the following shall apply:

1. The food container shall be clearly labeled in a way that identifies the owner:
2. Unused portions of food shall be discarded by the end of the day or returned to the parent.
3. An ice pack will be included in lunches requiring refrigeration.
4. Hot foods are to be brought in a thermos. We are not allowed to microwave food for any reason.

Parents need to be aware that if your child brings candy, soda, potato chips or other foods that would be inappropriate as a healthy lunch we will not allow your child to eat these items, **we will make your child an appropriate lunch and you will be charged a fee of \$5.00 if the entire lunch is provided or \$1 per item added.**

Good lunch Box items:

Raisins, cheese and crackers, grapes (must be sliced for children under 4), bananas, yogurt, ham sandwich, cheese sandwich, p-nut butter sandwich, bologna sandwich, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower with dip, p-nut butter crackers, hardboiled egg, thermos of soup, tuna salad, ham roll, biscuit w/ham, Jell-O with fruit, watermelon, cantaloupe, apples, oranges, cheese sticks (must be cut for children under 3) pepperoni, nacho's w/cheese, Vienna sausages, cream cheese on a bagel, beanie weenies, mac-n-cheese in a thermos.

Parents know what their own child's eating habits are. So please use this as a guide in the amount of lunch that is packed each day. Also remember that we do serve a morning snack and an afternoon snack each day. We are also happy to provide milk, water, or juice with your child's lunch that is brought from home.

A good lunch should contain components from each of the following food groups; Meat, Fruit, Vegetable and Bread.

Teachers and aides eat lunch with their class each day. We use this time to learn about good manners and sitting in our seats while eating. We also use this as a time to help teach responsibility.

Parents: Please be sure to alert your child's teacher to any food allergies that your child may have.

POLICIES ON ILLNESS

Children attending the center are expected to be able to participate in all activities. Parents are responsible for bringing their children to the center in good health and capable of participating in the day's activities. Please remember to follow this policy, as we do have children with compromised immune systems, as well as staff. It is a really good idea to have a plan in place for sick care. Possibly a relative, friend, or parents who take turns staying home so your sick child gets the rest they need to recover.

Children with short-term contagious or communicable diseases are **not** allowed to attend the center. The center is not licensed for sick children and is not staffed to provide one-on-one supervision.

Outside play is an integral part of a healthy day at the center. If children are well enough to come to the center, they are well enough to play outside.

It is the responsibility of each parent to inform Miss Amy's Child Care within 24 hours or the next business day after their child or any member of their immediate household has developed any reportable communicable disease, as defined by the State Board of Health, except for life threatening diseases, which must be reported immediately.

When, in the opinion of the center's staff, a child arrives at the center and is ill, the staff member cannot admit the child. When children become ill while at the center, the center will immediately notify parents and, if necessary, isolate children until they are picked up.

Parents or guardians are requested to pick up sick children within one hour of being called.

A fever is anything over 100.4

Once a child has a fever they may not return to the center until they have gone without a fever for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medications.

Our sick policy is designed to protect all of the children enrolled in the center and to promote the highest possible level of health. Your adherence to these policies will benefit everyone.

Parents are asked to notify the center daily if a child will not be attending. You can do this by phone, email or the Wonderschool APP and also let us know if your child is contagious, just taking a day off, or is being treated with an antibiotic. This is important so that we know to watch for possible reactions to the medication.

Awareness of changes to attendance enables us to plan for staffing, meals, and helps us keep our attendance records in order.

We will do our part in keeping our school as clean as possible while also observing hand washing and teaching children to cover their cough. Our staff will always be sent home if they have a fever or symptoms of a stomach bug. Children are required to wash their hands upon arrival at the center each day.

******POLICY ON ADMINISTERING MEDICATION******

Miss Amy's is able to give only emergency medication, which the Virginia Department of Social Services defines as an inhaler &/or an Epi-Pen. **No other medication can be given for any reason.** We also do not store medication of any kind. If your child requires an inhaler &/or an Epi-Pen, then please request the appropriate forms from us upon enrolment. These forms must be completed by the prescribing physician.

Please help us make this the best possible experience for your child. If we keep open communication between home and school, we can make this a wonderful time in your Childs' life. Thank you for choosing Miss Amy's for your family.

Sincerely,

Amy Bowie
Owner/Program Director
Miss Amy's LLC

Revised 6/30/2022