



STARS ACADEMY PARENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

2230 Harriet Street
Port Charlotte, FL 33952

2025-2026

www.stars-academy.com



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Welcome to **STARS ACADEMY**

Stars Academy is an early childhood education center providing quality care and education for children six weeks to five years of age. The directors, teachers and administrative staff look forward to partnering with you in your child's education. Parents are always welcome in our school, and your questions, comments, and feedback are greatly appreciated. Welcome to Stars Academy - where children shine!

Mission Statement

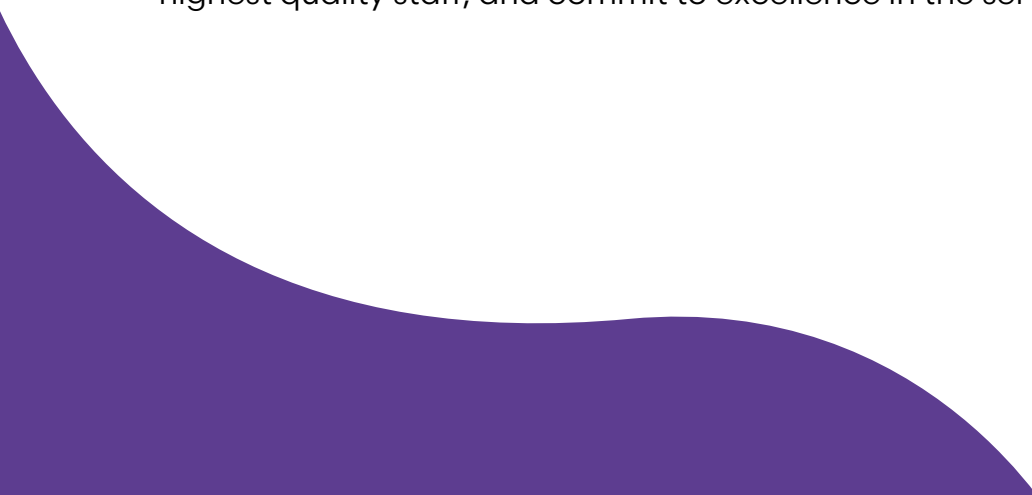
Stars Academy is committed to providing a safe and nurturing educational environment designed to instill self-confidence and a life-long desire for learning.

Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the whole child. We recognize that the cognitive, emotional, social and physical needs of each child are unique, and our programs are carefully designed to stimulate, engage and challenge the individual needs of each of our students.

Goals

Stars Academy's goal is to empower children with the self-confidence, self-assurance, knowledge, and moral awareness necessary to establish a strong foundation for their future.

We observe low teacher to child ratios, furnish the classrooms with equipment and materials that are essential to an exceptional learning environment, employ the highest quality staff, and commit to excellence in the services we provide.





Your Child's DAY

Pre-School Age Program

Stars Academy's curriculum has been carefully designed to stimulate, engage and challenge each stage of your child's development.

Our experienced team of early childhood education professionals implement this curriculum via programs that balance structured learning activities, physical activity, free play, and most of all, a lot of hugs. We offer fun, educational activities that instill a desire for learning!

Reading is a key factor in your child's education, and Stars Academy promotes literacy at an early age. We have a reading library in each classroom with an abundant selection of books that meet the interest of each child. Interactive reading is a part of the daily lesson plan and, when age appropriate, your child will be encouraged to read on their own.

Our curriculum enhances your child's imagination, creativity, social and emotional skills and basic values while challenging them to build self-assurance and problem-solving skills.

Daily Schedule

Children like having daily routines. Daily schedules are established and posted in each classroom to meet both the needs of the different age groups as well as our licensing agency. The schedule provides opportunities for large group participation, small group interaction, independent learning in activity centers, and outside exploration and play. In addition, each classroom has scheduled meal, snack, and rest times.



Enrollment & WITHDRAWAL

Inclusivity

Stars Academy does not discriminate. This includes non-discrimination on the basis of race, creed, sex, gender or gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, familial status, national origin, disability, or source of income when determining enrollment eligibility. We look forward to partnering with your child and your family and building a mutually respectful and collaborative relationship.

Enrollment Information

Information in your child's file must be kept current at all times. The parent is required by law to update the information furnished to Stars Academy as necessary, with changes initialed and dated by the parent and the Director (or designate). A copy of a child's completed enrollment forms will remain in Stars Academy's files as long as the child remains actively enrolled at the school and shall be available for inspection by the parent(s) and licensing specialists at any time. All information is kept strictly confidential.

Continued enrollment is predicated on the parents' agreement to notify the school of any change in phone numbers, address, emergency phone numbers, family physician, medical information, etc.

Withdrawal

In the event that a child is permanently or temporarily withdrawn from Stars Academy, a withdrawal notice must be submitted in writing to the Director at least two (2) weeks prior to the child's anticipated date of withdrawal. Full payment of tuition and other fees is required until the designated date of withdrawal or two (2) weeks from the date in which written notice is received, whichever is greater. If proper notice of withdrawal is not provided, the parent shall be responsible for full tuition for two (2) weeks after their child's last day of attendance plus any and all late charges and/or penalties that accrue until full payment is received. The parent is also responsible for any and all expenses incurred by Stars Academy in pursuit of payment.

Upon the child's last day of attendance, enrollment will be terminated. Re-enrollment will be based on availability and all registration, tuition, activity, and other fees shall be based on the then-current fee schedule.

Stars Academy reserves the right to withdraw a child without notice from a program should it become necessary (refer to the Expulsion Policy).

Financial REQUIREMENTS



Registration Fees

An annual, non-refundable registration fee for each enrolled family is due upon enrollment and thereafter on the enrollment anniversary. Please refer to the Enrollment Agreement for details.

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are due on a weekly basis in advance for all anticipated fees to be incurred for the upcoming week. Your account is charged each Friday prior to the week that services are to be provided and payment is due on that same day. If your work or pay schedule requires different arrangements and due dates, please see the Director to make a plan.

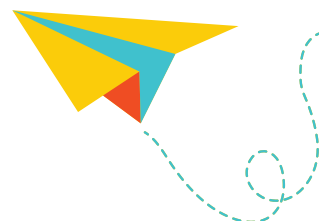
If tuition fees are not paid by 5:45p.m. on Tuesday of each week, a late fee will be assessed. Nonpayment of tuition and other fees may result in suspension or disenrollment. Please refer to the Enrollment Agreement for details.

Absences and Vacations

Due to staffing requirements and operational costs incurred on the basis of fixed levels of enrollment that do not fluctuate when one child is temporarily absent, tuition and other fees must be paid in full without deduction for absences for any cause and without substitution of any other days of attendance as "make-up" days.

Notwithstanding the above, each child is allowed two (2) weeks per calendar year at one half (1/2) tuition for vacation or illness. Such weeks must be taken Monday through Friday consecutively, during which time the child may not attend the school.

Parents must provide written notice to the Director in advance of their child's planned vacation/absence. Such notice shall be accompanied by an advance payment equal to one half (1/2) of the regular tuition. If advance notice is not provided, the full tuition and other applicable fees for the vacation/absence period will be due and payable.



School POLICIES

Hours of Operation

Normal hours of operation are Monday - Friday from 6:30a.m. to 5:45p.m.

2025-2026 Holidays

Stars Academy will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

08/11/25 - In-Service Day
09/01/25 - Labor Day
10/13/25 - Columbus Day
11/11/25 - Veterans Day
11/27/25 - 11/28/25 - Thanksgiving Day & Day After Thanksgiving
12/22/25 - 1/2/26 - Christmas Break & New Year Holiday Break
01/19/26 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
02/16/26 - Presidents' Day
05/25/26 - Memorial Day
06/19/26 - Juneteenth
07/03/26 - Independence Day

During weeks in which an observed holiday occurs, full tuition is still applicable. The exception to this is the two-week break for Christmas & New Year Holiday Break. Many families choose to use this time for their "Two Week Vacation Period."

Arrival and Departure

In order to maintain the safety and well-being of the children in our care, we require that parents accompany their children into and out of the school.

Upon arrival/departure each day, parents must check in/out their child at the front desk on the Procure Kiosk and ensure that the staff is aware of their child's arrival/departure.

We ask that when picking up siblings, parents accompany their children through the school.

Release Information

A child will be released only to the persons who signed the Enrollment Application or to authorized persons designated on the Enrollment Application. Authorized persons will be required to provide photo identification before children are released to their care. Parents are not permitted to phone in or email authorizations for student release.

Late Pickup

We ask that all children be picked up in a timely manner each day. We understand that from time-to-time things happen that make late pick up unavoidable. If you are aware of a late pick up, please notify the school immediately so that the staff is aware of the situation and can calm any concerns that your child might have. If this situation should arise, please notify another adult, whose written authorization is on file, to pick up your child if possible.

A late pickup fee is assessed for each minute after closing that the child remains on the premises. Please refer to the Enrollment Agreement for details.

If a child is still at the school one hour after closing and a parent or authorized person has not contacted the school, the person in charge is authorized to notify the local authorities who will then assume custody of the child until the parent can be found.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the school may be closed, open late or close early. If this situation occurs, we will follow the procedure below.

Stars Academy will follow the guidance provided by Charlotte County Emergency Management.

Emergency Situations

Stars Academy makes every attempt to be prepared for emergencies as they arise. Emergency plans with detailed instructions are posted in each classroom. We also conduct monthly fire drills and bi-annual emergency weather drills so that children are prepared in the event of an emergency.

In the event of evacuation, children will be transported immediately to the location indicated on the Emergency Medical & Transportation Agreement. Parents will be notified and advised of pick-up procedures.

Parents' Right to Access

To promote the partnership between parents and Stars Academy, parents are permitted access to the school at all times during normal operating hours. Appointments or advance notifications are not needed, however, we do ask your cooperation in not disrupting our programs.

We invite you to visit the classroom frequently and encourage you to participate. Parents are also invited to attend special events, luncheons, and one-on-one consultations with teachers.



Staff

Exceptional staffing and training is an important factor in the implementation and continued success of our curriculum and programs. Stars Academy employs a staff of trained, experienced associates that sincerely care for children and want to contribute to your child's development. We have a strong investment in educating our teachers on an ongoing basis.

Staff & Parent Behavior

Stars Academy is committed to providing a safe and nurturing learning environment to all of the children in our care. We speak with all children respectfully, and we do not tolerate any form of ridicule, improper language or corporal punishment. Stars Academy is a drug, alcohol, and smoke free environment. Smoking is strictly prohibited on the premises. We believe, because you as parents have chosen Stars Academy, you are also committed to these same standards of care. Therefore, we ask that you follow our philosophy when at our school.

Clothing

Children at Stars Academy will be very busy each day exploring their learning environment. We ask that parents dress their children each day in clothing that is comfortable and appropriate for that day's weather. We also ask that each child be provided with an extra set of clothing in the event that a change of clothes becomes necessary. For your child's safety, we ask that you send your child to school dressed in flat, closed-toed shoes. Children's clothing should be marked with name whenever possible.

Personal Belongings

We ask that children not bring toys from home. On special show and tell days, children may be permitted to bring toys or belongings that will be shared at the appropriate times and then returned to personal storage areas until the end of the day. If your child has a special blanket or soft toy that is needed during rest time for comfort, they may bring those items to use during that time. It is important to mark all your child's belongings with their name to avoid confusion when different children bring similar items to our school. Stars Academy does not assume responsibility for any items (clothing, toys, etc.) that are brought from home.

Nutritional Services

Stars Academy provides daily menus that meet the USDA requirements for young children according to their age. Menus are posted each week so that parents can be aware of what their children will be eating each day.



Due to severe peanut and tree nut allergies, Stars Academy is a nut sensitive school. Therefore, we do not allow products containing peanuts or tree nuts, or products that have been manufactured in a facility that processes peanuts or tree nuts, on school property.

Due to licensing regulations, parents are not permitted to bring food to our school, except as follows. Should your child have any allergies or special food-related needs, please speak with the Director (or designate) so that arrangements can be made to accommodate those special needs.

Parents are permitted to bring food to school for special occasions, such as birthdays, holidays, etc., as those foods will not be served to meet nutritional requirements. However, to ensure the safety of our allergic students, all food brought into the school, along with the ingredient labels, must be cleared by the front desk administration before it is brought into the classroom. On such special occasions, our regular meals and snacks will still be served.

Rest Time

It is important that all preschool children have the opportunity to rest each day. Children in the infant classrooms will rest according to their individual schedules. Children in the toddler and older rooms will rest according to the schedule posted in their classrooms. Children who do not nap will be allowed to read quietly or do other quiet activities while the other children nap.

Discipline

Children learn how to get along with others and develop self-control and confidence through the use of positive discipline. Stars Academy believes in positive reinforcement of socially acceptable behavior. As such, we strive to provide a loving, supportive environment that is conducive to positive behaviors and situations where children can learn to problem solve amongst their peers.

If situations occur that require staff intervention, we may use a variety of discipline techniques. Redirection, verbal instruction, logical, and natural consequences are the most common methods of discipline that we use. Should a situation occur where these methods are not effective, the teacher will guide the child away from the group to give them a few minutes to calm down and stabilize their emotions. The teacher will use this time away from the group to assist the child in sorting out the emotions and feelings that caused the disruption.

Physical discipline, corporal punishment, or yelling is not permitted at any time in our school.

Birthdays

If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at Stars Academy, please notify your child's teacher in advance. Our staff will be glad to assist you in making your child's special day a memorable occasion. However, due to licensing regulations, latex products, such as latex balloons, are not permitted in our school as they may cause an allergic reaction.

Also, please remember that Stars Academy is a nut sensitive school, and as such, products containing those ingredients, or manufactured in a facility that manufactures those products, are strictly prohibited.

Infants and Toddlers

Infants and toddlers have their own special needs and schedules. Our staff will work closely with you to establish an appropriate schedule to fit the needs of your child.

The center will provide Similac with Iron or Similac Soy Formula for infants up to 6 months old. Once the child is able to eat table food, they will be provided food from the daily menus posted at our school. Special formulas are to be provided by the parent or guardian.

Parents of diapered children are required to provide all diapers and wipes for their children. Additionally, we ask that multiple changes of clothing be provided for your infant or toddler as changing is usually more necessary at this age. A stock of diapers and wipes will be available at the center for children who have run out, parents should plan to send more.

Photographs or Video

Photographs or video of children participating in our programs may be taken from time to time. They may be used in Stars Academy publications or promotional material, reproduced, and used electronically and/or used for any other purpose. Please refer to the Photo Release Agreement for details.



State Licensing

Stars Academy is licensed by the Florida Department of Children & Families (DCF), Child Care Licensing Division. Our school strictly complies with all state licensing rules and regulations. Our licensing agency regularly monitors our school and programs and does quarterly and as needed inspections to ensure compliance with all rules and policies. We strongly support compliance with all licensing requirements in order to maintain the quality of services we provide to our students and families.

Your Child's HEALTH & SAFETY

Security

The safety of your child/children is our primary concern. As such, best effort is made to ensure the safety of all children in our care. In addition to the operational policies described in this handbook, Stars Academy employs physical building security and safety training to its staff as well.

Immunization & Physical

In order to comply with state law, parents are required to provide Stars Academy with an immunization report and physical at the time of enrollment and ongoing as the certificate expires. The certificate may be completed by your child's physician. A child's continued enrollment is predicated upon parents providing us with updated immunization reports and physicals as they become due.

Illness

To protect the health of all the children in our care and to comply with requirements imposed by the state licensing agency:

- If your child appears ill, has a fever of 101 degrees or higher, is vomiting or showing evidence of a communicable disease, please do not bring them to school.
- If your child is present at Stars Academy and exhibits illness symptoms, they will be extracted from the general population of children, and you will be asked to pick them up immediately.
- If any case of a communicable disease is observed and/or reported to Stars Academy, you will be notified.
- In order to return to school, your child must be without fever or illness for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. Children who return to school following an illness must be well enough to participate in the full range of classroom activities, including outdoor play.

The Director reserves the right to ask for physician's approval before readmission will be authorized in certain cases. Please refer to the Sick Child Policy for details.





Medications

Prescription and/or over-the-counter medication will be administered to your child only upon written authorization by the parent/guardian(s) using the Medication Authorization form.

In each case, the parent/guardian should complete and sign the Medication Authorization form and deliver it with the labeled medication to the Director or Assistance Director. Medications must be provided to the Director or Assistant Director each day, stored appropriately, and must be taken home each night. Medication should not be left in your child's bag and/or taken into the classroom. Siblings may not share medication. Any adverse reactions to a medication will be immediately reported to the child's parent/guardian(s).

Accidents and Incidents

We strive to provide a safe environment for children, and best-effort precautions are taken to protect your child's safety. If an incident or injury does occur, first aid will be administered to your child by trained staff. Parent/guardian(s) shall be notified of any incident/accident and a copy of the form will be completed and given to the parent/guardian(s). The form provides information about the nature of the accident and actions that were taken and requires parent/guardian(s) signature.

Emergency Medical Procedures

Children who require emergency medical attention while at Stars Academy will receive immediate attention from our staff that is trained in First Aid and Basic Life Support. The person in charge will make the immediate decision as to whether further medical attention is necessary.

If a situation is not an emergency, you will be notified so that you can pick up your child for further medical treatment.

In the event that emergency medical treatment is necessary, your child will be transported to the facility identified on the Emergency Medical & Transportation Agreement and you will be notified to meet your child and a member of our staff at that location.

Biting

On occasion, young children will bite as a means of communication or out of frustration. Our staff makes every attempt to avoid situations where biting could occur. Classrooms with children who are teething are provided with teething toys that help soothe gums and fill the biting need.

If your child is bitten at school, you will be informed, and our staff will comfort your child and will take steps to ensure that the situation will not occur again. If a child bites frequently, staff will observe that child and track activity patterns that may contribute to the behavior. Staff and parents will meet to develop a strategy to correct the biting behavior.

Stars Academy reserves the right to require parents to pick up their child due to a biting incident.



Potty Training

At Stars Academy, we believe that it takes a partnership between the staff, parents and child to have a successful, positive potty training experience. It is recommended that potty training begin when a child shows an interest. Parents and staff will meet to establish the training process. Patience and positive support will be given to children and their parents as they go through this learning experience together. We ask that you provide several changes of clothing each day for your child in the event of minor setbacks.

Reporting REQUIREMENTS

Stars Academy and its staff are mandated by law to report any suspected case of child abuse, exploitation, neglect or deprivation of any child in our care. Persons who fail to report according to state regulations can be held accountable by law.

Special Needs or REFERRALS

Stars Academy is committed to providing a facility that allows children with special needs to remain in a "natural setting" while receiving the extra care that they need. Our staff and management are prepared to work with you to provide and/or locate the services that are necessary for you and your child.





**We Are Here
to Support
You & Your
Child!**

Our CONTACT



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