



Smart Cookies

**Early Childhood
Center**

1717 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC 29407
(843) 852-2242

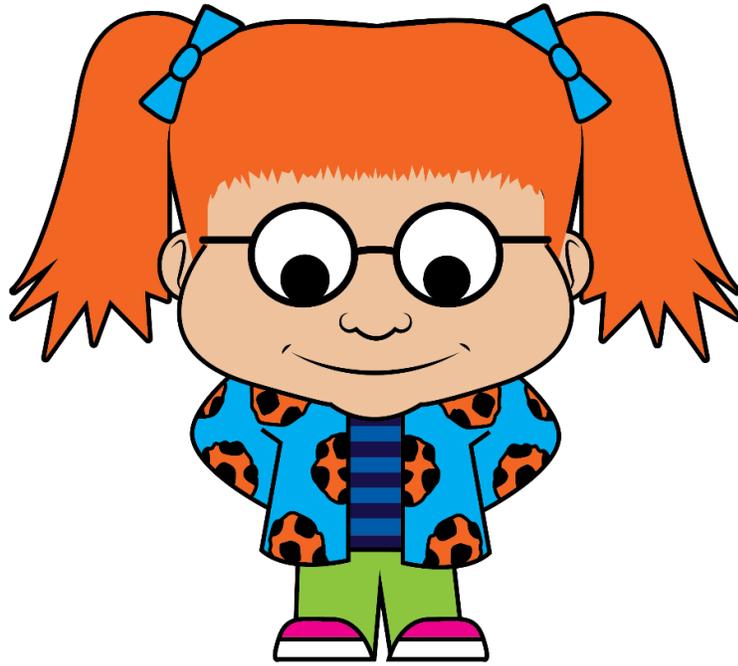
Dear Parents,

Thank you for your interest in Smart Cookies Early Childhood Center. Here is the information you requested. This parent handbook outlines our program, policies, and procedures. It also includes all the forms necessary for enrollment. Please feel free to contact us at any time. We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Susan Mitchell

Director



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**Parent
Handbook**

FINGERTIP FACTS

LOCATION: Smart Cookies Early Childhood Center
1717 Savannah Hwy
Charleston, SC 29407

PHONE: 843-852-2242

E-MAIL: www.SmartCookiesSC@gmail.com

Website: www.SmartCookiesSC.com

DIRECTOR: Susan Mitchell

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Paula Moland

HOURS: Monday – Friday, 6:30am - 6:00pm

SCHOOL CLOSINGS FOR 2018

January 1	New Year's Day
February 19	President's Day
May 28	Memorial Day
July 4	Independence Day
September 3	Labor Day
November 22 & 23	Thanksgiving
December 24 & 25	Christmas

2018 PROGRAMS AND RATES

Full-time: Monday – Friday, 6:30 am – 6:00 pm

Infants/ Crawlers	(6 weeks – 12 months)	\$235 weekly
Waddlers	(13 months – 24 months)	\$230 weekly
Toddler 1	(25 months – 30 months)	\$230 weekly
Toddler 2	(31 months – 36 months)	\$230 weekly
Pre-K 3's	(37 months – 48 months)	\$220 weekly
Pre-K 4's	(49 months and up)	\$220 weekly

Part-time: 6:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Available for 3's and 4's only

M/W/F	\$155 weekly
T/TH	\$115 weekly

Late Fees are \$15.00 per 15 mins after 6:15 p.m.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

Thank you for your interest in Smart Cookies Early Childhood Center. The primary objective of our school is to help each child develop a sense of self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning. Every child is encouraged to discover their individual talents and take pride in personal achievements. Through positive reinforcement, small group activities, and creative expression, we build a foundation for a lifetime of learning with your child. Our program is designed to encourage characteristics such as self-confidence, curiosity, persistence, initiative and the ability to focus.

At Smart Cookies, we know the importance of building trusting relationships between children, their peers, and adults. Our staff is trained to give each child plenty of individual attention. Our program aims to meet the needs of each child's individual age and development level. Our goal is for each child to grow to their full potential at their own pace in a fun, loving, organized, and stimulating environment.

AGE GROUPS

INFANT ROOM (6 weeks to approximately 10-12 months)

At Smart Cookies, our caregivers focus on primary caregiving. We work to help every child build a sense of security and lay a foundation for the development of confidence and trust. We work closely with the parents to customize a daily routine that will fit the family's needs. Our staff is educated and trained in infant development and we provide a stimulating, safe, and secure environment to encourage the infants to explore and trust their caregivers.

WODDLERS (approximately 10-12 months to 18 months)

In this age group, we encourage the children to explore the world around them. Activities are child initiated. Our caregivers act as facilitators for the children as they give support and guidance. The activities offered for this age group are for manipulation and exploration. Materials in the rooms will be rotated often, as the interests of the children change. A stimulating environment is created to nurture curiosity and motivate each child. Parents receive weekly lesson plans to gain insight into what key concepts are being introduced.

TODDLER 1 (approximately 18 months to 2.5 years)

Short group activities are essential for this group. We build upon their interest and share the joy of uncovering the pleasures of everyday life. Your child will be surrounded with meaningful language to enhance the learning value of each new experience. Your child will be given the tools to experiment with newly acquired abilities. They will discover that they can make things happen. This increased awareness occurs while the children are enjoying sand play, water play, toy riding, shape sorting, block building, kitchen play, ball bouncing, and many other activities.

TODDLER II (approximately 2.5 to 3 years)

At this age, children are beginning to develop special friendships. They will learn to interact with their peers. Group activities are extended and academic introduction will begin to take place. Activities are modified according to each child's own individual creativity and self-expression. This age group will continue to enjoy many of the same activities mentioned earlier. Potty training is also part of the classroom. We will work with parents and children to conquer potty training in a nurturing, safe, and positive way.

PRE-K 3's (approximately 3 to 4 years)

Social development is very important at this age. Children are developing stronger relationships and learn how to treat each other. Sharing, caring, helping, manners, and healthy habits are some of the concepts the children practice. Using words to express emotion is a main focus in the class. The children learn to verbalize feelings and ask for what they want. Sitting during circle time, paying attention at story time, listening to each other speak and practicing patience, help prepare the children for a structured school day. In addition to social skills, the children practice writing, numbers, sensory play art and dramatic play (just to name a few!).

PRE-K 4's (approximately 4 to 5 years)

Kindergarten preparation is emphasized at this age level. The teacher prepares lessons geared toward reading readiness skills and self-expression. The children are offered a variety of activities to enhance social development, as well as pre-math and pre-reading skills. Children will build a strong academic foundation through structured learning and carefully planned curriculum.

AREAS OF LEARNING

The following areas are implemented in each classroom, specific to their age group and are included in all of our pre-school programs.

Reading Readiness: Oral language development; readiness for books, discrimination of sounds; repeating a pattern; discrimination of letters; ability to recognize printed name; building a sight vocabulary; ability to recognize rhyming words; ability to retell stories and past experiences; and most importantly, the discovery that reading can be a great source of pleasure and fun.

Math Readiness: Concepts of big and small, few and many, more than and less than; basic numbers 1-10 and 1-100; telephone numbers; addresses; patterns; simple computers; geometric shapes; and measuring. A variety of learning activities are provided to make learning more fun.

Art: Primary and secondary colors; cutting, pasting, and gluing; painting with different kinds of media and textures; weaving; paper mache; mobiles; holiday projects; seasonal themes and personal creations. Not only is art a lot of fun, it also promotes visual motor coordination.

Science: Lessons consist of a variety of simple experiments and experiences. Science involves investigating, listening and manipulating. Asking questions and interacting are encouraged. The children will be introduced to animals, plants, planets, the change of seasons, the five senses, night and day and much more. The opportunities are endless.

Practical Life: The children are introduced to a variety of tasks often performed in everyday life. They include folding a blanket, setting a table, washing dishes, pouring water, washing hands, buttoning, snapping, tying, and buckling. Our curriculum also includes stranger danger, telephone manners, emotions, safety rules and community helpers. Dress up clothes, dolls, trucks, dinosaurs, tools, animals and tents (among so many other things) are used to enhance imaginative play.

POLICIES

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE: Upon arrival, parent shall accompany all children from the car into the school and upon departure, from the school to the car. **Please do not leave children unattended in your car or the parking lot area.** Children will be released only to persons authorized by parents (they will be asked to provide picture I.D.). If you must send someone to pick up your child that is not on our approval list, we must be notified in writing or your child will not be released to that person.

ARRIVAL TIME: Though we have no strict policy regarding drop-off time, it helps if children can be dropped off by 9:00 am, when possible, to limit interruption to our daily programs. Transition time during drop-off and pick-up time can be difficult. **Please maintain a short routine** with your child during those times to ensure an easier time for all involved.

ABSENCES AND LATE ARRIVALS: Please call our office by 8:00 am if it is necessary for you to arrive late in the morning or if your child will not be attending school on that day. If you will be taking the day off from work or at a different location for the day, please let the front office know how you can be reached in case of emergency. Please also notify the front office if your child will be on vacation.

*Please make sure to update your child's records with the office anytime information may change. This includes work location, phone numbers, emergency contacts etc.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT: Discipline will be provided through a combination of positive reinforcement and redirection. It is expected that we work together to alter negative behavior. Emphasis will be placed on recognizing positive behavior by showing love and encouragement. Positive reinforcement emphasizes what the child *should* be doing and teaches self-esteem.

LUNCH AND SNACKS: Parents are asked to provide lunch and snacks daily for children. Please consult the director or your child's teacher regarding meal times. Some parents prefer to send snacks in daily, while others bring in bulk snacks twice a month.

Please note: All utensils, food and beverage containers will be sent home rinsed, but not sterilized.

Due to many children with food allergies, please **do not send in lunches and/or snacks containing peanut butter.

***For children in the Infant Room, please make sure that there is extra food (formula or baby food) in case of delayed pick-up. Also, please make sure all new food items are tried at home at least 3 days before sending it to school in case of allergies.

VERY IMPORTANT- Please label all bottles, covers, dishes of food, etc. Please write out a detailed schedule of your child's feeding and sleeping times, so that we may help you maintain an established routine.

NAPS AND QUIET TIME: Parents are asked to bring in 2 crib sheets and a blanket in a laundry bag or pillow case all labeled. Please do not bring in loose items. Parents are responsible for taking home their child's bedding at the end of their scheduled week for laundering. Our naps and quiet time will be held in the early afternoon. Infant nap times will be scheduled according to the child's needs and individual schedules.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION: Report and sheets are filled out daily for all children. We send most information via e-mail.

TRACKING CHILDREN: Parents are to sign their children in and out of the facility. Teachers track the children throughout the day recording counts on a spreadsheet every hour, as well as their times in and out of the classroom.

CHILD RECORDS: Smart Cookies keeps a file cabinet in the office and a separate record is kept for each child. The file is kept in a confidential manner, but shall be immediately available to the Department, the child's teacher/caregiver, parent, or guardian upon request.

PARENT ACCESS AND COMMUNICATION: Smart Cookies shall permit the parent of a child in care free and full access to his or her child without prior notice, while their child is receiving care, unless there is a court order limiting parental access. This free access must not disrupt instructional activities and classroom routines.

DIAPERS AND POTTY TRAINING: If your child wears diapers, please send a supply of disposable diapers, baby wipes and whatever cream or powder you prefer. For sanitary reasons, we cannot use cloth diapers. Teachers will notify you when your diaper supply is low, and please make sure you label all packages. We request wipes twice a month to keep a constant supply available. We will assist you in potty-training your child if you request, while you reinforce it at home. During this time, we will need a number of extra changes of clothes.

CLOTHING: Please provide 2 complete and seasonally appropriate set of clothes for each child in case they get soiled and uncomfortable. This includes socks. Be sure to label each item. For younger children we recommend you send in a minimum of 2 bibs daily and keep several changes of clothing in their cubbies. During the hot summer months, please send in sun block and hats. For safety purposes, please send children in close toed shoes.

TOYS: Toys are furnished for all children. For safety reasons, we do not allow children to bring toys from home. Smart Cookies is not responsible for any toys from home. However, the children may bring a special teddy bear or blanket to sleep with. Remember to label it! (*Infants may not have any items other than a crib blanket in their crib per DSS licensing law).

SHOTS & VACCINATIONS: If at all possible, when it is time for your child to get their shots or vaccinations, we would appreciate it if you would schedule them on Friday afternoons. Frequently children react to these visits and do not feel well afterwards. During these times they may need mom or dad to comfort them. **When your child does receive immunizations, please submit a copy of the updated immunization records to the front office.**

SICK DAYS & VACATIONS: Tuition is considered an annual tuition, as in most preschool and childcare centers. If your child is sick or does not attend for another reason, full tuition payment is still required. This includes vacation time and days when we may have to close for serious weather. (Please note: we make every reasonable effort to remain open.)

TRANSPORTATION POLICY: We do not offer off-site transportation or off-site field trips.

PROVISIONAL EMPLOYMENT: We do not offer provisional employment.

RATES AND PAYMENTS*: Our rate is year-round tuition, which is broken down into weekly rates, and guarantees your child a year-round spot. This rate is subject to change upon 30-day notice. Payment is drafted from your checking account or credit card through Tuition Express on 25th of the preceding month. Bills are available by the 21st of the preceding month. The amount due is the weekly tuition times the number of Mondays in the upcoming month. (i.e. If your weekly tuition is \$230, and there are 5 Mondays in the month, tuition would be 1150. If there are 4 Mondays, it would be \$920 for that month). Alternate payment plans available on request.

A \$35 fee will be charged for insufficient funds. If a payment is received after the 5th day of any month, an additional 10% service charge will be assessed and due along with tuition.

HOURS: Our regularly scheduled hours are Monday - Friday, 6:30am-6pm. Late fees will be assessed at the rate of \$1.00 per minute after 6:15pm. Please call if you will be delayed.

CLOSING FOR SEVERE WEATHER: Every effort will be made to remain open on all regularly scheduled days. However, if we are forced to close due to dangerous weather conditions, or other unforeseen acts of Mother Nature, there will be a recorded message on the regular school telephone number 843-852-2242 informing callers of the details.

ILLNESS: Please inform us if your child has been ill during the night or is not feeling well upon arrival. For the protection of all children in our care, we reserve the right to restrict the attendance of a child who is obviously ill. If a child has a communicable disease, which is not physically evident, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the day care provider of the disease or illness. Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill during the day and at the discretion of the childcare provider a parent may be asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. A child with a fever of 100.3 and higher must be sent home and cannot return until they are fever free for 24 hours (without the aid of any medication). Considering this possibility, it may help your work attendance if you have pre-arranged backup care for those times. Please understand that State Child Care Rules and Regulations prohibit a childcare provider from giving medicines (including aspirins, cough syrup or drops) to a child, unless that childcare provider has written permission from the child's doctor. (A prescription from the child's doctor with a pharmacy's label on the medicine bottle which includes doctors name, the child's name, dosage instructions and a recent filling date will be acceptable.)

MEDICATIONS: If it is necessary to administer medication to your child, you must fill out the medication form in your child's classroom or the office.

EMERGENCY: A "medical emergency treatment permission form" is provided for your signature, authorizing us to call for proper qualified medical assistance in the event of an emergency. In the case of such an incident, we will contact the hospital or rescue squad immediately, the child's doctor and the parents, as soon as possible, in that order.

TERMINATION OR PARTIAL CHANGE IN THE CONTRACT: A written notice of thirty days in advance of termination or any changes in contract must be presented to the director of Smart Cookies. In lieu of notice, the fee for the thirty days must be paid upon termination and your deposit will not be applied to any amount due.

****PLEASE NOTE:** Termination of a signed contract prior to a child's schedule start date will result in loss of deposit.

We reserve the right to terminate this contract with seven-day notice. If this is necessary, deposit money minus any fees incurred prior to the termination date will be returned to the parents.

SUMMARY: We will give your child loving and instructive care and provide surroundings conducive to his or her physical, social and emotional needs. We all want the best tender loving care for your child, so it is important that we keep the lines of communication open. **We treasure the opportunity to spend this very special time in your child's life with you and your family.**

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

We also offer the following programs to enhance your child's learning and fun here at Smart Cookies Early Childhood Center.

Spanish - Our resident Spanish teacher is Senora Gladys Labarca. A native of Santiago, Chile, she is married and has 2 grown children. Her daughter resides in Chicago and her son and his family reside on Daniel Island. She is the grandmother of 2 boys, one 14 years old and the other 11. She has been in the USA her entire life and graduated from Drexel University. She has been teaching Spanish to early childhood children for 30 years. The objective in every class is to have your children actively participate in the Spanish language. Ages 2 and up; offered every Wednesday. Through her Spanish teaching, the children will learn day-to-day experiences expressed and presented in the Spanish language.

Gardening Lady – Each Wednesday we welcome Miss Dana Mong. She will introduce the 2 ½ - preschooler classes to the beauty of our world through plants. Watch for our children's garden this Spring!

Art – Sadie Mong brings her talents to Smart Cookies preschoolers every Tuesday.

Charleston County Library Book Mobile visits every other Monday.

All above enrichment programs are included with tuition.

Optional programs (additional fee)

Ask about Soccer Shots and Dance Express.

PHILOSOPHY OF CHILD DISCIPLINE

"...To train or develop by instruction, especially in self-control"

- Webster new Collegiate Dictionary.

It is the philosophy of the center to help children grow emotionally as well as intellectually, to help children succeed, feel good about themselves and be able to express their feelings in a positive and constructive manner.

It is our policy that discipline be positive. Discipline is not punishment. It is a way of helping children learn to identify socially acceptable behavior.

Within our center, limits and rules are clearly defined, consistent and in accord with the appropriate development and age of each child and the program in general. We focus strongly on reinforcing acceptable behavior and preventing undesirable behavior by being responsive to the needs of the children.

Methods of correcting inappropriate behavior within the center consist of the following:

- 1) Re-direction of activities to change the focus of a child's behavior
- 2) Individualized attention to help the child deal with a particular situation.
- 3) Time-away by removing a child for a few minutes from the area or activity so that he/she may gain self-control.
- 4) "Catch the child being good." We respond to and reinforce positive behavior; we acknowledge or praise to let the child know we approve of what he/she is doing.

Discipline shall not be isolation without supervision, nor withholding food or attention. No child shall be subjected to corporal punishment, emotional neglect, abusive language, ridicule, or any behavior that shall intimidate, frighten, or endanger a child, or his/her self-image.