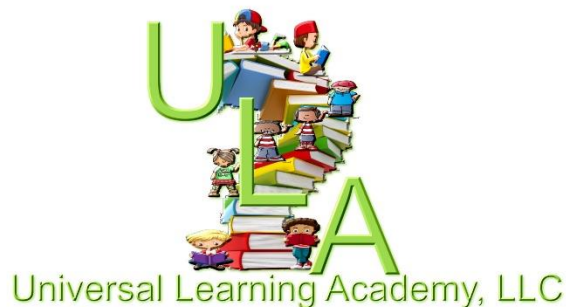


**UNIVERSAL  
LEARNING ACADEMY #3  
PARENT  
HANDBOOK**

**JANUARY 2022 THROUGH DECEMBER 2022**

**2439 Peach Orchard Rd Ste. 9 Augusta, GA 30906**



Universal Learning Academy #3  
2439 Peach Orchard Rd Ste. 9  
Augusta, Georgia 30906  
(706) 922-1851

**Rate Sheet**

**May 1, 2022**

Registration Fee .....	\$75.00 per child
Three Years Old.....	\$110.00
Four Years old.....	\$110.00
Drop-In Fee.....	\$45.00
Before & After School Program.....	\$80.00
Summer Camp (Five – 12 Years Old).....	\$90.00

If your child is absent from the program, it is your responsibility to carry out their weekly tuition unless an agreement/arrangement has been accepted through the finances.

If your child attends for three days, it is considered a week.

Drop-in fee is only charged when availability has been approved by management.

Thank You.

Dear Family,

*We would like to welcome and thank you for choosing our center. With our well-established vision, mission, and goal, we promise to provide a safe and fun learning environment for your child|ren. We also promise to provide excellent quality childcare as we ensure the safety of your child|ren. Your trust and expectations will only result in well-developed and loving relationships amongst your family and the caregivers of our center. Our center is truly a "home away from home," and with that, we say to you.....*

**!!!!WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY!!!!**

Sincerely,

*Universal Learning Academy LLC*

*Yiet Knight*  
*(Director/Owner)*

706-922-1851

706-793-7025 fax

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## ABOUT US

### *Philosophy*

As of 2020 the overall goal of the center is to begin the application process and achieve a possible Three (3) Star Level through Bright from the Start Quality Rated Program. With this additional accolade, it will assist our children in the early years of their childhood. We have discovered that our children develop their skills best through interactive play. Because we believe so strongly in this approach towards the learning environment of the children, we strive to provide a learning environment that allows children to explore, be creative, and develop character as they also become more independent during small group activities. We encourage diversity and practice family style dining which will allow the children to develop socially and become more aware of the different cultures that surround them. As we allow them to explore and utilize their creativity, we as caregivers witness both positive psychological and positive sociological behaviors within the children throughout the center. We understand that each child is unique and have their own individual personality; therefore, we also promote self-awareness, self-esteem, self-discipline, self-help, and self-motivation. Caring for children require unity and team cooperation so we agree with the saying "It takes a village to raise a child." Our overall concern is the welfare of our children, whether they are in our care or at home with family and friends. We also strive to develop healthy, well trusting, and loving relationships amongst our caregivers and the families of our children. Universal Learning Academy (ULA) is dedicated and determined to help your child grow and learn while in their early stages of childhood. "Your child is our number one priority."

**Mission:** To continue to develop a higher level of learning in Early Childhood Education.

**Vision:** To maintain a professional level in Early Childhood Education to the children, families, and community in which we serve. Provide the necessary resources to our families through our resource center and quarterly parent cafés to assist with the wellbeing and meeting the needs of the entire family.

**Goal:** Continue to build our early childhood educational foundation that will assist and prepare our children for the next educational level to establish a Private School for grades K-5.

### *Certification*

ULA is licensed by Bright from the Start Georgia Early Learning.

### **Hours of Operation**

Child care services are provided from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM [Monday] through [Friday] .

### **Holidays**

We are closed for certain holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Dr. Martin Luther King B-Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday), Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

### **Definition of Family**

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

### **Admission & Enrollment**

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed, and enrollment fee paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

An enrollment fee of \$75.00 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 3 to 12 years of age.

After school care enrollment hours are from 2:30 P.M to 6:00 P.M

Transportation is provided from some public schools in the local area. These schools are selected at the center's discretion and this service may change at any time. However, there will be no public-school bus pickup and delivery to this location.

### **Our process for introducing children to our program is:**

First, allowing both the parent(s) and child to meet all management staff, teachers, and classmates of the child's age-group. Second, an orientation is given to the parent of the policies and procedures and overall operation of the center. Third, the child will be allowed to enter the classroom with parent(s) who he/she will be assigned to interact with classmates for a brief period.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate based on special needs if a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

If your child has an identified special need,

The center will work with you and outside programs to provide the necessary care within our capabilities so that no discrimination will be practiced. However, if the center cannot meet the needs of the child and the family, other suggestions will be given of programs that can provide quality care for the child's special need.

### ***Inclusion***

**ULA** believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

### ***Non-Discrimination***

At ULA, equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

### ***Confidentiality***

Parents are assured that the Center and the Center's staff will make every effort to maintain strict confidentiality in regard to the child(ren) and families we serve. Information that parents discuss with the Director or Staff regarding their child, family, or other matters, will be held in strict confidence. Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released except for that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential. Please notify the Director of any/all issues or concerns that you may have concerning this matter.

### ***Staff Qualifications***

Our caregivers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. All employees of ULA must provide a satisfactory fingerprint criminal background check before they are able to start employment. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Education/Certification</b>	<b>Experience</b>
Teacher	HS Diploma/GED, Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education or ECE certificate, or CDA	2 years
Teacher Assistant/Aide	HS Diploma/GED, Child Development Associate, or ECE related courses	1 year

Caregivers participate in an orientation class and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by **ULA**.



## ***Child to Staff Ratios***

Children are always supervised. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We will maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios when applicable for the center:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Child to Staff</b>	<b>Maximum Group Size</b>
Three-years old	15/ 15:1	15 /15
Four-years old	18 / 18:1	18 / 18
Five-years old	20/ 20:1	20 / 20
6-8-years old	25:1	25
9-12-years old	25:1	25

***VOLUNTEERS:*** *ULA volunteers are not paid staff and not counted in the child: staff ratio. Volunteers are highly recommended and welcomed to come into our classrooms.*

## ***Communication & Family Partnership***

**Daily Communications.** Daily notes from center staff will keep you informed about your child's activities and experiences at the center. Notes will be placed into your child's cubby at the end of the day.

**Bulletin Boards.** Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

**Newsletters.** Quarterly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are available at the sign-in/sign-out desk for your taking.

**Cell Phone Usage.** The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we must communicate with one another about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child, other children and adults who may wish to communicate with you, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.

**Email.** We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

**Parent Resource Room.** At this time, we do not have a parent resource room, but there is a family resource wall available to parents by the director's office.

**Family Visits.** Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor's badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving.

**Family Night.** Family nights are scheduled on a regular basis. These nights include snacks, drinks and fun filled age-appropriate activities for families. Family Nights allow families and

children time to share, learn, and have fun. Families have an opportunity to be a part of their child's learning experience and connect with other families.

**Assessments.** Teachers will perform an Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) on all children at least twice a year. The results of the ASQ will be discussed in Parent/Teacher Conferences.

**Conferences.** Family & teacher conferences occur at a minimum of [twice] a year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

**Publicity**

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

**CURRICULA & LEARNING**

**Learning Environment**

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

Copies of daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

Pets are only used for learning experiences, if appropriate vaccinations will be on file.

**Outings & Field Trips**

Weather permitting; we conduct supervised field trips to approved child friendly events (such as parks, movies, Chuck-E-Cheese's, museums, local libraries, the zoo, etc). Children are always accounted for. Parents will be notified when a field trip is planned. A permission statement for participation in field trips is required for each child and must be signed by a legal parent/guardian. **The center will transport children in the center's van and only trained staff will be able to drive to & from field trips.**

Parents are encouraged to join their children on field trips.

Parents are also responsible for all costs of the field trips and must be paid the day prior to the scheduled field trip. This includes all admission fees, lunch, and extra spending money (extra spending money is optional for the parent to provide to the child).

On some field trips, lunch will not be provided by the center and will be the responsibility of the parent. The parent will be notified prior to the day of the scheduled field trip. Parents must

provide funding for their child's lunch; the lunch will meet the requirements of the USDA Child and Adult Food Program.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. **Socks and walking shoes are a requirement.** Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child (if your child is wearing sandals or flip-flops, they will not be allowed to participate in the field trip whether or not permission has been given).

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of child care programs. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the child care program as well as during field trips.

**Booster seats from ages 3 to 8 years must be provided. The center does not provide booster seats for field trips.**

### ***Transition***

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

**Transition from home to center.** Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

**Transition to elementary school.** Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

### ***Television Time***

Our normal daily routine does not include television watching, but from time-to-time, we may record a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. Television consumption will not be longer than twenty minutes and the program will be screened prior to showing. Programs will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. This must be approved by the Director.

### ***Electronic Media***

Electronic Media are limited to 20 minutes or less per day per child. Internet sites and software are pre-screened to contain non-violence and high-quality educational content.

## **Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

## **Celebrations**

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community. We acknowledge cultural holidays.

## **Rest Time**

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. No blanket is placed in infants cribs only fitted sheet is permitted. Caregivers are trained on SIDS and information sheet pertaining to SIDS is located on the Parent Information Board in infant classroom. Back to Sleep pattern is used for all infants who cannot turn themselves due to the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and parents are encouraged to do the same at home.

After lunch, all children less than [7] years of age participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

Napping Materials are provided by the center in accordance with the state policy. This includes mats/cots and fitted sheets. Mats/Cots are placed 3 feet apart and the children are placed in a head to toe position to avoid the spread of germs.

Children may bring a small blanket from home; the blanket must be taken home with the child each Friday for cleaning and can be brought back to the center on Monday.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **General Procedure**

Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

### **Acts of Aggression and Fighting**

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all the children.

Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child.

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

### **Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families**

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

### **Payment**

Payment is always due in advance on Monday of the week being served with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Each payment is due as outlined in the *Enrollment Agreement Upon Enrollment*.

**Refunds:** if any refunds are owed, they will be paid 14 days after final day of withdrawal.

### **Late Pick-up Fees**

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of [\$1] per minute /per child will be assessed beginning at 6 PM and will be due upon arrival. This fee is to be given to the staff member waiting with your child; if it is not paid by the second day, the fee will be charged to your account with added late charges.

### **Special Activity & Transportation Fees**

From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity, or trip. There will be NO FEE for transportation to and from school within a five (5) mile radiuses. Our program will not go beyond five (5) miles.

### **Late Payment Charges**

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs. Therefore, we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received on Wednesday of the week served, a late fee of [\$10] will be added for each day that it is late. If your account has not been paid in full within [5] business days, your child is subject to being discharged from the program.

If payment is more than [10] business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

**If you are receiving childcare assistance, your approved statement will indicate the amount that you are responsible for paying each week. Any unpaid payments will be forwarded to collections.**

### ***Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges***

All returned checks will be charged a fee of \$35.00. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on “cash only” or “money order only” status.

### ***Additional Fees Credits***

- **Vacation** - to retain your child’s spot during vacation, [50%] of your regular tuition is due. Vacation days can be used if written notice is given in advance for the days the child will not be in attendance. Tuition must be paid prior to going on vacation. These fees are non-refundable if you choose not to return. Parents who are current with their childcare may receive one free week vacation but must notify the center 2 weeks in advance.
- **ALL FEES AND CHARGES OCCURRED ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PERSON IN WHICH THE AGREEMENT IS SIGNED.**
- **Withdrawals** - if a child is suddenly withdrawn from the program without a [2] week written notice of withdrawal, a [2] week tuition fee may be applied. Families who withdraw and later re-enroll will be charged a re-enrollment fee.

### ***Credits & No Credits***

- **Credit will be given for Excused Absences** - if your child is hospitalized, absent due to a contagious disease, or absent at the request of the child’s doctor, the absence is considered excused. A written doctor’s note is required to receive a credit.
- **Credit will [not] be given for Sick Days** – there are [no] credits for sick days. Sick days are pre-considered in determining tuition and are [not] refundable.
- **Credit will [not] be given for Inclement Weather** - if we do not open due to inclement weather on a day that your child is scheduled to attend, your account will [not] be credited for that day.

## **ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL**

### ***Absence***

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9AM (cut off time) please call us at (706) 922-1851. This action does cause concern about your child and family.

### ***Vacation***

Vacation days only apply if your child is normally scheduled to attend on those days. Each child is given [5] vacation days each calendar year.

### ***Withdrawals/Termination***

A written notice, [2] weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in additional fees. Should the Director determine that a child'(s)/parents(s) **(a)** cannot adjust to the Center's program, or **(b)** child has unreasonable behavior which fringes upon the rights of other children (ex: repeated, physical abuse, such as biting, striking, kicking, etc. of other children and/or staff, ungovernable display of rage, repeated use of profane language etc.), the child will be dismissed and the contract will be terminated.

### ***Transfer of Records***

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required.

### ***Closing Due to Extreme Weather***

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, and loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on News 12 (WRDW) [www.wrdw.com](http://www.wrdw.com) /TV station and/or 107.7 (WPRW-FM) radio stations.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

### ***General Procedure***

We open at [6:30] AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

We close at 6:00 PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

**IT IS THE PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY IN WHOM SIGNED THE ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT, TO UPDATE AND SUPPLY THE CENTER WITH ALL NEEDED INFORMATION REGARDING HIS/HER CHILD AND THEIR WELL BEING.**

**PARENTS HAVE THE PERMISSION OF CENTER DIRECTOR TO ACCESS ALL CENTER AREAS USED BY THE HIS/HER CHILD.**

**IT IS MANDATORY THAT PARENTS SIGN THEIR CHILDREN IN AND OUT OF THE CENTER UPON ARRIVAL AND DURING DEPARTURE. IF SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE PARENT/GUARDIAN WILL BE PICKING UP OR DROPPING OFF THE CHILD, PLEASE ENCOURAGE THEM TO FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES.**

**HANDWASHING PROCEDURES MUST ALSO BE FOLLOWED BY BOTH PARENT AND CHILD UPON ENTERING THE CENTER.**

***Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up***

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after [1] hour we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency (Department of Family and Children Services)

**WE UNDERSTAND THAT CONTACT INFORMATION IS SOMETIMES CHANGED. PLEASE ENSURE THAT WHEN THESE CHANGES OCCUR, THE CENTER IS PROVIDED WITH THE UPDATED INFORMATION IMMEDIATELY.**

***Right to Refuse Child Release***

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 16 years and must have valid ID present during the time of pick-up.

**PARENTS MUST CONTACT THE CENTER PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF PERSONS PICKING UP YOUR CHILD WHO ARE NOT AUTHORIZED/LISTED ON FILE TO DO SO. THEY TOO MUST HAVE VALID ID PRESENT AS PROOF OF IDENTITY.**

**PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

***What to Bring***

- **Preschoolers:**  
At least one change of clothes, socks and shoes, and supplies at teacher's request
- **Kindergarteners:**  
At least one change of clothes, socks and shoes, school supplies
- **After School Care Children:**  
Books for homework and supplies
- **If any other supplies are needed, a note will be sent home with the child.**



Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

### ***Cubbies***

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name and photo. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

### ***Lost & Found***

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box located at the front entrance next to the infant room. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

### ***Toys from Home***

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

This includes the following: mp3 players and handheld games.

## **NUTRITION**

### ***Foods Brought from Home***

**[A]** We request that you provide nutritious meals daily for your child to include breakfast, lunch and snack.

**[B]** Special outside food is permitted under the following conditions:

- Perishable food to be shared with other children must be store-bought and in its original package.
- Provided with a doctor's statement or religious reasons of any restrictions, the following is recommended:

<b>Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional breakfast. Lunch and snack.</b>	
Breakfast: Whole grain muffin Orange slices Milk/Water	Lunch: ½ turkey sandwich Pickles, tomatoes Carrot sticks/Apple slices Milk/water

Snack:	
Yogurt	
Saltine crackers	
Water	

**DUE TO FOOD ALLERGIES AND RESTRICTIONS, FOOD THAT HAS BEEN PREPARED AND BROUGHT FROM HOME, WILL NOT BE SERVED TO OTHER CHILDREN/STAFF IN THE CENTER.**

***Food Prepared for or at the Center***

Hot meals will not be prepared at or by the center; however, a place for heating meals will be provided. A food preparation area is available to accommodate the needs of food service. If food is prepared for your child at the center in the exception of a component not being provided by the parent, the center will have properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>) and the state requirements for food service.

- All provided meals and snacks will be served accordingly:
  - Breakfast (served between the hours of 8:00 A.M to 8:30 A.M)
  - Lunch (served between the hours of 11:00 A.M to 12:00 P.M)
  - Afternoon Snack (served at 2:30 P.M)

**Food Allergies**

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

***Meal Time***

At mealtime, the table is set with disposable plates and disposable flatware. Children are encouraged to serve themselves from their own meals. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Weekly menus will be posted in the event of a missed component.

A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

## HEALTH

### ***Immunizations***

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every[January], we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department. A form 3231 must be provided from a physician's office, health department or clinic to the center with the enrollment agreement before the child may attend the center. If the form 3231 is not available upon enrollment, you will have a 10-day grace period to provide the form to the center. A form 3300 (vision, dental, hearing screening) is required for all children age three (3) and up. This form is due within 90 days after the third birthday or upon enrollment if child is age three (3) and up. Follow up services are provided as needed.

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received no later than 6 weeks after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program. Health services referrals are available upon request of the parent.

### ***Health Consultants***

The outside health consultants available to the center are

- Althea Brown R.N. BSN
- Valerie Harden R.N. MSN
- Ernest Harden R.N. BSN (retired)

Contact information is available upon request.

Health education classes are provided at the center at the cost to the center. This is a benefit to the parents.

### ***Daily Health Check***

We conduct a health check, as soon as possible, when each child enters the center each day. We look for skin rashes, elevated temperatures, itchy scalps, lethargy and changes from usual behavior. These are quick checks to protect the wellbeing of all children in the program. Please understand these are not physicals and do not substitute for proper routine pediatric care.

### ***Illness / Care of Sick Children***

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child

comfortable, but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive. While your child is waiting to be picked up, he/she will be removed from the other children and placed on a mat away from the group; in the absence of the director. When the director is available, he/she will sit in the office until the parent arrives. (Please see our policy on page 11 if someone other than the parent will be arriving to pick the child up).

**IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE ABSENT, PLEASE NOTIFY THE CENTER SO THAT WE MAY DOCUMENT THIS IN OUR RECORDS**

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever –the center staff will check the child’s temperature under the arm. If the child’s temperature is 101 degrees or greater, the parent of the child will be notified in order to pick the child up from the center.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child’s physician signs a note stating that the child’s condition is not contagious, and;
  - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician’s note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

Head Lice

- Children with head lice will not be allowed to return to the center until they have been treated and no further head lice or nits are detected during a health check.

## **Allergy Prevention**

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

## **Medications**

All medications should be given to a lead teacher with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed. **MEDICATIONS THAT ARE TO BE GIVEN TWICE A DAY WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED BY CENTER STAFF; MEDICATIONS THAT ARE TO BE GIVEN MORE THAN TWICE A DAY WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY CENTER STAFF.**

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication. **If any noticeable adverse reaction to any administered prescribed medication occurs, based on the severity, 911 will be called immediately and the parent/guardian will then be notified. Documentation of the incident will be completed by staff administering with an incident report completed in DECAL KOALA by Center Director.**
- The original information sheet from the medication must be provided for all medications that are to be administered by center staff. This sheet must also include all allergies to medications.
- **Prescription medications** will only be administered by the assigned/trained staff member. A medication form must be fill out by the parent and approved by proper staff upon arrival to the center.
- **Non-prescription medications** will not be administered with the exception to:
  - Baby wipes
  - Band-aids
  - Neosporin or similar ointment
  - Bactine or similar first aid spray
  - Sunscreen
  - Insect repellent
  - Non-prescription ointment (such as A&D, Desitin, Vaseline)
  - Baby Powder
  - **The parental authorization form must be obtained in order for the caregiver to administer these items when needed.**

## ***Communicable Diseases/ Exposure***

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. **The center will notify each parent/staff with a communicable disease letter explaining a potential contagious illness.** **Parents must notify the center immediately when their child has been exposed to a communicable disease outside the center.** We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

## **SAFETY**

### ***Clothing***

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

**Socks and closed-toe shoes are required for all scheduled outdoor activities. If your child does not have the proper footwear, he/she will not be allowed to participate in any scheduled outdoor activity.**

### ***Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play***

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 99 °F or less than 37 °F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if the air quality rating is 50 or below.

### ***Communal Water-Play***

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play. The water is emptied daily and hand-washing procedures are practiced when the children transition from one activity to another.

### ***Injuries/ Child Accident or Incident***

Safety is a major concern in childcare and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area to prevent injuries or accidents. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

**Parental authorization must be given for a child to be released to emergency medical services (ambulance). Your child will be taken to (MCG) Children's hospital/ University of Health Sciences 1120 15<sup>th</sup> Street Augusta, GA 30912 (706) 721-0211**

**ULA is not responsible for any/all medical fees accrued by your child's injury.**

### ***Respectful Behavior***

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

### ***Cell Phone Usage***

The time you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we must communicate with one another about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child, other children and adults who may wish to communicate with you, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.

### ***Smoking***

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are always non-smoking areas. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises. **Anyone found to be engaging in any form of smoking activity while on the premises of the center will be in violation of the law and the local law enforcement will be contacted immediately upon discovery. This individual will be charged with a misdemeanor and will become fully responsible for all legal consequences as a result of this violation.**

### ***Prohibited Substances***

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately and local law enforcement will be contacted.

### ***Dangerous Weapons***

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

### ***Child Custody***

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

### ***Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect***

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may investigate. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. **If such report is needed, the center staff will contact the Department of Family Children Services (DFACS) office of Child Protective Services at (706) 721-3000 520 Fenwick Street. In the event, that an investigation is needed, all info is kept confidential.**

## **EMERGENCIES**

### ***Lost or Missing Child***

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within [10] minutes, the family and the police will be notified.



## ***Evacuation Procedures***

At the time of an emergency evacuation at the center, the children will be escorted by all staff into the open parking lot in a safe and secure location. All staff will also have their emergency evacuation bags which consist of emergency contacts for all children. You will be notified at this point.

## ***Fire Safety***

Our center is fully equipped with mandated fire equipment and training.

- We conduct fire drills every month with the time and date recorded by management (this drill is not done at the same time each month.)
- We complete required fire training every 3 years for all staff members and volunteers
- We have annual documented fire inspections of all mandated equipment, fire safety training, and fire drill logs by the local fire department.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a weekly basis.

## ***Emergency Transportation***

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

**Parental authorization must be given for a child to be released to emergency medical services (ambulance). Your child will be taken to (MCG) Children's hospital/ University of Health Sciences 1120 15<sup>th</sup> Street Augusta, GA 30912 (706) 721-0211.**

**ULA is not responsible for any/all medical fees accrued by your child's injury.**

- **PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN THE EVENT OF EMERGENCIES: EMERGENCY PLANS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AND ARE POSTED FOR PARENT VIEWING.**

## UCCLC EMERGENCY PLANS

### LOSS OF POWER:

Teachers for **Rooms I should** seat children on the floor in room I for circle time. No child should leave the group unless escorted by a teacher to the bathroom. A flashlight will be located next to the fire extinguisher in room I if needed for extra lighting.

Teachers for **Rooms J should** seat children on the floor in room J for circle time. No child should leave the group unless escorted by a teacher to the bathroom. A flashlight will be located next to the fire extinguisher in room J if needed for extra lighting.

### LOSS OF WATER:

In case of loss of water, the Director or appointed person will go and purchase water from the nearest local grocery store, Save A Lot for emergency situations whereas water is needed. If the water is not operable for more than 30 minutes parents will be called to pick up their children and the Center will be closed until water is back operable.

### LOSS OF HEATING:

In case of loss of heating, and the weather is permitted for the heating system in the building, then the Director or appointed person will notify all parents after 30 minutes if heating system is not operable to pick up their child(ren). The teachers in the classrooms will put the children on their own jackets and/or blankets to protect them from the weather until parents have arrived. The Director will notify parents upon return.

### LOSS OF COOLING:

In case of loss of cooling, and the weather is permitted for the cooling system in the building, then the Director or appointed person will notify all parents after 30 minutes if cooling system is not operable to pick up their child(ren). The teachers in the classrooms will make sure that the windows are open for a breeze to come through. The Director will notify parents upon return.

### LOSS OF A CHILD:

If at any time during the day a child becomes missing from their assigned group, the Director or person in charge should be summoned immediately. Children in the child's group will be questioned by Director or person in charge if child is verbal while the teacher looks for the child. The Director or other appointed management will then go to the security monitor to locate the child on the premises. If the child is not found after an extensive search of the grounds and building, a ten (10) minute time frame, the police and the missing Child's parent will be called to the center. A police report will be filed, and an investigation will begin. Bright from the Start will be notified by phone immediately and by email/and or fax within 24 hours by the Director.

### **LOSS OF A CHILD FROM A FIELD TRIP:**

If at any time during the day a child becomes missing from their assigned group, the Director or person in charge should be summoned immediately. The Management of the designated facility where the field trip is will be notified immediately. Children in the child's group will be questioned by Director or person in charge if child is verbal while the teacher looks for the child. The Director will ask management of the facility to check their security cameras if available to help in the location of the child on their premises. If the child is not found after an extensive search of the grounds and building, a ten (10) minute time frame, the police and the missing Child's parent will be called to the field trip location. A police report will be filed, and an investigation will begin. The other children will be returned to the center using the transportation checklist which will be performed by two (2) staff with one being the lead teacher upon return. Bright from the Start will be notified by phone immediately and by email/and or fax within 24 hours by the Director.

### **SERIOUS INJURY/ DEATH OF A CHILD:**

In case of a death of a child:

1. Teacher should secure care for other children in another area.
2. Director summoned,
3. Another teacher should be enlisted to call 911 while Director and Teacher begin efforts to resuscitate the child.
4. Remaining Teachers should stay as calm as possible and should keep children calm and occupied in an area away from the scene of the emergency.
5. Director and Teacher will continue resuscitation efforts until paramedics arrive.
6. Director will phone parents while paramedics use rescue efforts. Parents will be told to meet us at the Georgia Regents University.
7. Director will accompany child in ambulance to the hospital where she will greet parents and inform them of the sequence of events using the term "unconscious" until the Doctor comes forth with his own diagnosis.
8. Police will be called, and a report will be made to Bright from the Start immediately.

## ULA EMERGENCY PLANS FOR FIRES OR NATURAL DISASTERS

### **FIRE:**

The Director or appointed management personnel will pull the fire alarm in the event of a real live fire and steps below will be followed thereon after and practiced once monthly with by pulling the fire alarm system.

Each lead teacher will grab their classroom roster along with evacuation bag. Children in room I will exit through front door with teacher and walk into designated safe area on sidewalk in an orderly fashion where they will remain with their teacher until notified by the Director to return to the building. Each lead teacher will then call the roll for attendance with the assistance of the teacher assistant(s) to ensure that no child was left behind. This documentation will be noted in the Daily Attendance Sheet. The Director or appointed person will ask each lead teacher for their head count to be recorded on the fire drill log sheet. When the class is all accounted for and documented, the Director or appointee will release the class to return into their classroom.

Each lead teacher will grab their classroom roster along with evacuation bag. Children in room J will exit through back door with teacher and walk into designated safe area on the back of playground in an orderly fashion where they will remain with their teacher until notified by the Director to return to the building. Each lead teacher will then call the roll for attendance with the assistance of the teacher assistant(s) to ensure that no child was left behind. This documentation will be noted in the Daily Attendance Sheet. The Director or appointed person will ask each lead teacher for their head count to be recorded on the fire drill log sheet. When the class is all accounted for and documented, the Director or appointee will release the class to return into their classroom.

The director or appointed personnel will call the Fire Dept. to check the building in the event of a live fire. Staff and students will not return until given permission to do so by Fire Marshall.

### **BOMB THREATS: Five (5) short blows of whistle**

Building evacuation will be carried out the same as for the fire drill. Bomb squad will inspect the building before anyone will be allowed to return.

### **SEVERE LIGHTING STORMS:**

No whistle will be blown. At the first sound of lighting and/or thunderstorm, each lead teacher will stop immediately all individual activities in which are being conducted in the classrooms. The lead teacher will calmly and carefully assemble all children to the center of the classroom with the teacher assistant assisting. If know assistant is available, then lead teacher will conduct accordingly. Once all children have been assembled to the center of the floor, then the lead teacher will close any windows or doors which are open and let blinds down. The teacher will then join the children in a quiet activity such as a quiet story and/or song until the weather permits the children to assume their regular activities in the classroom.

**TORNADOES: Two (2) short blows of whistle.**

The Director or appointed management will conduct a tornado drill twice a year. Each lead teacher will get their classroom roster and assume positions listed:

**Room I-** Each child will get on their knees around the walls of the classroom with their head faced down on their knees and their arms over the back of their neck and head. They will remain this way until the Director gives other instructions. Teachers will stay close to children ensuring that each child is in the correct position and remains that way.

**Room J -** Each child will get on their knees around walls of the classroom with their head faced down on their knees and their arms over the back of their neck and head. They will remain this way until the Director gives other instructions. Teachers will stay close to children ensuring that each child is in the correct position and remains that way.

In the event of a live tornado and other outside assistance is needed, Director or appointed person will contact 911 for assistance.

**Structural Damage to the Building:**

In the event of any structural damage to the building, Director or appointed management will contact the insurance company, Phoenix Associates, for assistance and Bright from the Start for guidance. If the building will not be able to be used, all parents will be notified via phone call that the center will not be available at the time. The Director will assist the parents to the best of ability in helping with this transition.

**EVACUATION LOCATION FOR UNIVERSAL LEARNING ACADEMY:**

**\*\*\*\*IN THE EVENT THAT 2439 PEACH ORCHARD RD STE. 9 MUST BE REMOVED FROM THE PREMISES, WE WILL EXIT BUILDING AND PROCEED TO THE BACK OF THE BASKETBALL COURT**

**CENTER POLICIES**

Our center policies are reviewed quarterly updated annually or more frequently and are available for review upon request. To view the center policies, please contact the center director.

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# Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

The handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are completed.

Thank you for your cooperation, and we look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **ULA Parent Handbook**, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the **ULA** staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management any questions I may have regarding any policy, procedure or information contained in the **ULA Parent Handbook**.

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Recipient Signature

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Date

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Center Staff Signature

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Date

## ADDENDUM A:

EFFECTIVE MARCH 20, 2020, OUR CENTER IS FOLLOWING ALL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CDC PROVIDED IN THE EXECUTIVE ORDER PROVIDED BY GOVERNOR KEMP DUE TO THE CURRENT PANDEMIC AND IT IS IN EFFECT UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

THESE ORDERS AND CHANGES OVERRIDE ANY POLICY IN PLACE AT THIS CURRENT TIME.

ADDENDUM A CHANGES IMPLEMENTED BY:  
OWNER, YIET KNIGHT