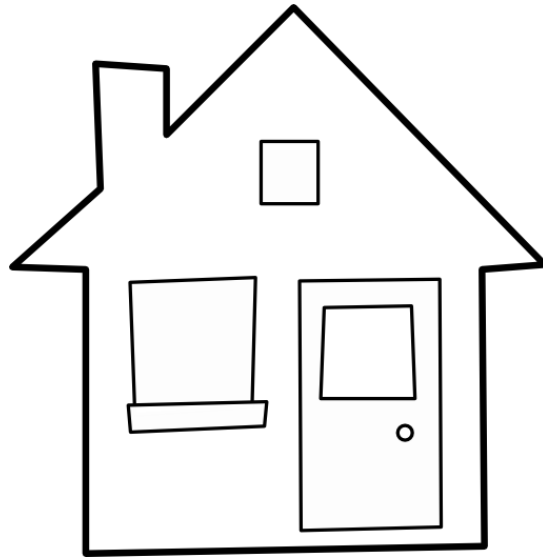


# Parent Handbook



Play, Learn, and Grow

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## Basic Information

Hours of Operation: 7:00am-5:30pm Monday through Friday

Address: 1239 Berkeley St. Durham, NC 27705

Phone: (984) 439-1689

Website: <https://www.theplayhouse123.com>

Director/Owner: Monika Bunch

Email: [mbunch@theplayhouse123.com](mailto:mbunch@theplayhouse123.com)

[chrisbunch@theplayhouse123.com](mailto:chrisbunch@theplayhouse123.com)

Ages: Servicing children 3yrs-12yrs old

This handbook should serve as a guide to our program. We hope that our handbook will help you better understand the policies and procedures of The Playhouse. We reserve the right to modify these procedures and policies at any time to comply with state regulations or The Playhouse directives.



Welcome to The Playhouse Early Academy! The Playhouse is a wonderful place for your child to explore, experiment, and pursue their own interest. Our creative themes are enhanced throughout the learning centers. All activities are age appropriate and are geared to help your child learn, grow, and thrive in a loving and engaging environment.

We hope this year will be a significant building block in your child's life as he or she develops socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively.

Thank you for allowing The Playhouse to be part of your child's early years!

## Philosophy

The Playhouse philosophy is what children learn during birth through kindergarten lays the foundation for learning. Therefore, our center provides an environment where each individual child can experience acceptance, security, and love. These experiences are critically important to children's success later in school. All children can learn and grow up in a loving and healthy environment.

## Getting Ready for School

Prior to your child's first day of school complete the following forms: enrollment, emergency medical, medical, immunizations, and read and sign all agreements. Visit The Playhouse at <https://www.theplayhouse123.com> to pay the registration fee, tuition, and other fees. Call and speak to the director to set up a Discover Day. Discover Day is from 9am-11am. This is a day to help your child or children to adjust to their new environment. Once all is completed your child is ready to start their first day of school!

## First Day of School

Dress your child comfortably for school. Children will spend time indoors and outdoors daily. Please dress them in clothing that is suitable for painting, eating (spaghetti), or outside play so that you do not mind them getting messy. For the safety of all children, we require them to wear closed-toed shoes. Parents are asked to bring one set of full change of clothing to be kept in child's cubby along with a blanket for rest time. All articles of clothing and blankets should be labeled with your child's name on it. **The Playhouse is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged clothing, jewelry, electronics, and or toys. We strongly recommend that you keep valuables at home.**

## Safe Arrival/Departure

All children should arrive at school by 9:00am. If your child arrives later the parent or guardian must phone ahead. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian that must be 18 years of age when entering the building. Upon arrival parent/guardian must sign children in. Please make sure you acknowledge the teacher or staff to make them aware that you have dropped off your child or picked up. Accompany your child to the handwashing sink making sure they have thoroughly washed their hands. Departure time the parent/guardian must be 18 years of age to pick up child. Children must be signed out when being picked up. If first time picking up, they will be required to show identification. Parent/Guardian must give The Playhouse written permission allowing the child to be picked up by anyone not on authorized pick-up form. Child will not be released without written authorization!



## **Policies Fees and Payments**

There is a **non-refundable** registration fee. The registration fee secures your child's space! A **non-refundable** renewal registration fee is due annually. Parents/Guardians may visit The Playhouse website at <https://www.theplayhouse123.com> to view cost of registration, tuition, and other fees. Payments can be made online by visiting <https://www.theplayhouse123.com>

All children are considered full-time and must pay the full tuition. Tuition is billed weekly and must be paid every Friday prior to service. If an invoice or bill was not received it is still the responsibility of the payer to make sure that tuition is paid on time and according to your financial obligation.

Tuition must be paid for care to be given. If tuition is late a reminder will be issued. If the account is not brought current immediately, care may be suspended or even dismissed.

If a child is absent, sick, on vacation, or the center is closed for holiday closures, teacher workdays, inclement weather, emergencies, early release, vacation, etc. tuition is still required! Tuition secures your child's space!

Tuition cost is reflective but not limited to: help maintain low ratios, salaries, training, and school supplies. Tuition rates will be reviewed annually. Parents or guardians will be given thirty-day notice of any increases in our rates.

The Playhouse gives a 10% sibling discount on full-time tuition (applies only for daycare).

Parents or guardians may request end of the year tuition statements for tax purposes.

The Playhouse accepts the following forms of payments: check, money order, cash, PayPal, and debit card payments.

### **Returned Check Fee:**

There is a \$35.00 charge for all returned checks. The payment for the check amount and the returned check fee must be paid by cash, cashier's check, or debit card. After a second return check we will no longer accept a check as a form of payment.

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

The Playhouse closes at 5:30pm. We ask parents to be respectful of the closing time. If you are running late, please phone ahead. A late fee of \$1.00 a minute will be assessed after closing

time. Late fees **must** be paid upon pick up. A child or children may not be allowed to return to the school unless late fees have been paid. Habitual lateness can lead to dismissal.

### **Inclement Weather**

If there is a delay or closing due to inclement weather parents/guardians will be notified via email, text, Brightwheel alert, or can tune into ABC News.

### **Pick-Up by persons other than those Designated**

Written authorization is required when anyone other than the parent, guardian, authorized pick up person, and or emergency contact person arrives to pick up a child. Written authorization can be in an email or text. Picture identification will be required to release the child for pick-up.

### **Release of Children**

If a child is to be withheld from a parent or guardian, the parent or guardian with custody must furnish a copy of the official custody papers to be kept in the child's file. If there is any change in the legal custody of a child while enrolled at The Playhouse the parent or guardian must notify the director and provide a certified copy of the court order confirming change in custody.

### **Attendance**

It is important that children develop a pattern of coming to school regularly. All children should report to school by 9:00am. This helps children with routine and prepares them for grade school. If you are receiving subsidies from social services or any other agency and your child does not meet the attendance requirement you will be responsible for the tuition charges not paid by the agency. In order to maintain a high-quality center we ask parents/guardians to call if their child will be absent, sick, or arriving late.

### **Abuse and Neglect**

Our goal is to protect the children in our care. North Carolina requires any person to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. The Playhouse is a mandated reporter and as a mandated reporter we will report any suspected case of child abuse and neglect. All child abuse and neglect cases will be reported to the proper authorities.

### **Allergy/Dietary**

We are a peanut free school! If a child has special dietary need such as a food allergy, the parent must furnish this information in writing from the child's physician. In addition, a dietary form must be completed by the child's physician and returned to school. Dietary forms must be completed annually. Lifestyle preferences must be discussed and shared with an administrator. A lifestyle preference form must be completed and kept on file. Lifestyle preference forms must be completed annually as well. The Playhouse will provide substitutions to make sure meal requirements are being met. If a substitution cannot be provided by The Playhouse the parents will be allowed to bring in the substitution. However, the substitution must be approved by an



administrator. Please make sure all items are labeled with the child's name, date, and name of item being stored and given to the cook to refrigerate.

### **Birthdays/Celebrations**

Birthdays can be celebrated at The Playhouse. Parents/Guardians are welcome to bring cake, cupcakes, juice 100% etc. All items must be commercially prepared (store bought). Balloons of any type are not allowed!

Holiday and celebrations may be shared at The Playhouse. Please make sure items brought into The Playhouse are commercially prepared (store brought).

### **Transportation**

Transportation will be provided by The Playhouse in a car or van. The Playhouse meets all state and county laws for transporting children. The Playhouse must have written permission from parents/guardians to transport children in their file. This also applies for emergencies as well.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are allowed unlimited access to the school during operating hours to observe, participate, and visit their child. We invite parents to volunteer their time, talents, or materials to help enrich the program. Parents and families are encouraged to participate in our "Playhouse Family Time" such events include Spring Fest, Fall Feast, Fall Festival, family movie nights, and barbecues. We enjoy having fun and spending time with our families!

### **Playhouse Parent Board**

Our parent board is another great way of getting involved! The parent board is designed to oversee the different activities of The Playhouse and to encourage parent participation. The parent board also helps with the hiring process for The Playhouse. Please see the director on how to get involved today!

### **Parent Communication**

Parents are welcome to call the school and check to see how their child is doing. Monthly newsletters, weekly emails, and daily observation sheets are all forms of communication here at The Playhouse. There is also a suggestion box located in the foyer where parents can feel free to drop their suggestions and ideas in. Quarterly parent teacher conferences are conducted in the fall, winter, and spring. This is a great way for parents and teachers to share pertinent information as it relates to your child.

### **Discipline/Conduct**

The Playhouse uses positive reinforcement and guidance. Teachers and staff model positive ways to show children how they can talk and interact with others. We do not place children in "time out". Children are redirected and given a choice of something else they would like to do. Sometimes children may need a calm down time. Teachers and staff share with students how they can calm their body by taking deep breaths, counting, or patting their tummies and saying,

“calm down”. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. The use of corporal punishment is prohibited. If your child is experiencing some difficulty, and or exhibiting challenging behaviors such as fighting, use of profanity, disrespecting teachers, staff, students, displaying aggressive behaviors, communicating threats, any sexual behaviors will be grounds for immediate termination of care. We will notify you and you will have to pick up your child immediately! “Not every fit, is a good fit for children”.

### **Biting**

Biting is usually done with younger children as a form of frustration. We encourage our students to use their language to express their feelings. Our staff is here to help children develop the necessary tools and language to help them communicate. We will do everything to work with you and your child however, if biting persists, we will have to disenroll your child.

### **Withdrawals /Refund**

A two-week written notice is required for withdrawals and must be given to the director. All tuition must be paid in full upon withdrawal from The Playhouse. Failure to give the director two weeks’ notice may result in being charged for one full week.

All tuition and other fees are non-refundable. Any credits on an account will be credited to your account. If you withdraw from The Playhouse and still have a credit on your account, it will be refunded to you within thirty calendar days of the withdrawal date.

### **Dismissals**

Childcare can be terminated for the following: failure to comply with policies and procedures, or health and safety procedures, exhibiting challenging behaviors, and or child, parent/guardian, fails to adjust to The Playhouse experiences.

### **Grievance Procedure**

If you have a comment or complaint about our program, we ask that you adhere to the following guidelines: Call or visit the director’s office. The director will work with you to help resolve your issue by developing a plan of action that is appropriate for you and the program. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, you should give a detailed outline of steps to be taken to resolve the issue in a letter and send it to the director. It is our goal to work with you to resolve the issue. However, if a mutual understanding is not met it may be necessary to disenroll the child from the program.



### **Health and Safety Handwashing**

Handwashing is a procedure directly related to health and the occurrence of illness. Frequent handwashing with soap and water is a vital routine for caregivers and children at The Playhouse. Please make sure your child washes their hands upon arrival and departure of The Playhouse.

### **Care of Sick Children**

Children who are ill will not be allowed to remain at The Playhouse. Children with any of the following will be excluded from care:

1. 2 or more episodes of vomiting
2. Fahrenheit temperature of 100°
3. Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has started
4. Any contagious virus or symptomatic of disease (lice, pink eye, conjunctivitis)
5. Onset of diarrhea characterized by an increased number of bowel movements

If a child becomes ill at The Playhouse the parent or guardian will be notified and expected to pick up the child as soon as possible. The child will be isolated from the other students and will have to remain in the office until they are picked up.

A child may return to school after all the following are met: all symptoms are gone, they have been fevered free without the use of Tylenol or any other medication within 24hrs, as well as the child is feeling well and can engage in all activities at the school.

If diagnosed with any illness that is contagious a child may return to school with a doctor's note stating the child is non-contagious. Otherwise, the child must not come back to school until after 48 hours of exposure. The director has the right to deny any student from returning to the school if they deem, he/she is not healthy. It is important that sick children do not come to school to limit the spread of illness. We appreciate your help in assuring that we have a safe and healthy learning environment.

### **Communicable Disease:**

If a child has a communicable disease or a serious illness, the parent must have a doctor's statement that the child is able to participate in normal routine before they can return to school.

Parents must notify the school immediately of the child's diagnosis. The school will notify the health department and take any necessary precautions. If a child has been exposed to any communicable disease or virus parents/guardians will be notified if their child was exposed.

### **Medication**

The Playhouse does not administer medication. However, if medicine must be administered to comply with the state law and for safety of the children, the following procedure must be followed: prescribed medicine shall be in its original container bearing the pharmacist's label which lists the child's name, physician's name, and name of medicine or prescription number. Medication is never to be left in child's cubby or book bag. All medications must be checked in with the director.

### **Accidents/Emergencies**

The parents must complete an Emergency Medical Care form to provide emergency treatment. All staff are trained in CPR and first aid, if an accident occurs that requires only first aid staff will provide immediate care. The director or teacher will report the accident to you during the day or at the end of the day depending on the nature of the injury.

In case of an accident that requires more than first aid, necessary medical professionals will be called immediately, and parents/guardians notified. Please make sure emergency information is always kept updated in your child's file. See the director for any changes or updates. Should an emergency requiring evacuation occur you will be notified immediately, and the children will be relocated to an alternate location. The Playhouse will follow our emergency plan that has been set in place. Please see the director for more information regarding our emergency plan.

### **Smoke Free**

The Playhouse is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is not permitted on our school grounds including outside.

### **Ban on Weapons**

Weapons of any kind are not permitted on school grounds. As a safety precaution we also request that your child not bring any toy which resembles a weapon to school.

## **Program Curriculum**

Creative Curriculum is used for our Playhouse Preschoolers ages 3yrs-5yrs. The Creative Curriculum focuses on children's social-emotional, language, physical, and cognitive development. Teachers teach objectives if needed modifying the lesson plan to ensure the success of all students. Teachers incorporate math, science, and social studies into the curriculum giving children a well-rounded learning experience. The Playhouse school ages use the High Energy curriculum that focuses on language emergent, creative expression, social-emotional, and indoor/outdoor gross motor activities. Our High Energy curriculum captures

youth interest and curiosity. Both curriculums allow the opportunity for children to take ownership of their current and future learning experience.

### **Homework**

Staff will encourage students to do their homework and provide support as needed. Students will have a set time to spend on homework assignments. However, it is the students' responsibility to make sure they are completing any homework assignments.

### **Outdoor Play**

Outside play is an integral part of the day. Children go outside daily (weather permitting). The Playhouse uses the Childcare Weather Watch to make decisions on going outside in cases of extreme heat or cold. Monitor the weather and dress your child accordingly. Layers are best during cold winter months. Please note we do not keep children inside because parents/guardians do not want their child to go outside. Children who are not well enough to go outside are not well enough to be at school.

### **Meals and Snacks**

The Playhouse provides breakfast, lunch, and snack. Therefore, we ask that no outside food for children be brought into the building. The Playhouse uses mealtimes as an opportunity to teach nutrition, manners, conversation, and to encourage new food interests. All meals are well balanced and nutritious. Weekly menus are posted for parents to view. All meals meet state licensing and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines.

### **Field Trips**

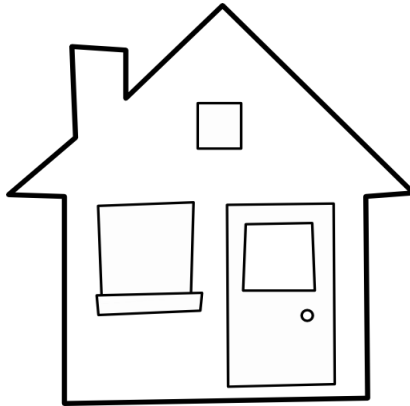
Field trips are planned to enhance the learning experiences of children as well as to broaden the curriculum. Parents/guardians are notified in advance of planned activities away from The Playhouse. A permission slip is required prior to attending a field trip. Children that do not have a signed field trip permission form will not be permitted to attend the field trip. The parent or guardian will need to make alternate childcare for the day. The Playhouse abides by all safety and state law vehicle regulations.

### **Rest Time**

It is important children have a balance between active play and quiet activities. During the afternoon children will nap for approximately two hours. If children wish not to nap, they are given a quiet activity on their cot. For rest time children will need a small blanket. They are welcome to bring one soft toy to rest with. Blankets are to be taken home weekly to be laundered and brought back to school. Sheets for your child's cot are provided by the school. Please make sure blankets are labeled with the child's full name.

## Opening/Closings

The Playhouse operates Monday through Friday. We follow Durham Public School's traditional calendar for holiday closings. We are **closed** for vacation one week in July and one week for Christmas. Parents/guardians will receive notices and announcements regarding closures. Please see an administrator for additional information on school closings.



# Handbook Receipt

I the parent of \_\_\_\_\_ have read, reviewed, and understand the policies presented before me. I understand these policies are part of my contractual agreement with The Playhouse Early Academy. I have received a copy of the Summary: North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules. I acknowledge that the Playhouse Early Academy is a tobacco free school. I understand that I will be notified of any changes or updates to The Playhouse.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**The Playhouse Early Academy**

**Play, Learn, and Grow**

**<https://www.theplayhouse123.com>**