



## **Family Handbook**

### **Welcome to See um Smile Playhouse!**

Welcome to the See um Smile Playhouse family and the partnership we will share during your child's early years. The need for good quality childcare is great, and See um Smile Playhouse strives to meet that need by providing nurturing educational experiences for your child as they grow. Our goal is to help your child explore and begin to understand the world around them and to lay the foundation for a fun future of learning!

This handbook includes policies and important information you will need. We hope you will read the handbook carefully and ask any questions that you may have. Open communication is important for our center's staff and our families. Thank you for choosing See um Smile Playhouse! We're glad to have you and your little one with us!

See um Smile Playhouse  
297 East Main Street  
Farmington, AR 72730  
479-267-2491

Owner: Charles Rateliff  
Director: Tesla Grogan  
Asst. Director: Rolinda Grogan

## **What You Need to Know Before Your First Day**

### **Program Hours**

7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday

We may host occasional hours during the year for Parent's Night Out, Razorback Games, or Holiday Shopping. These will be communicated via the center bulletin board and newsletters.

### **What to wear**

Your child should dress for an active day. We suggest comfortable, washable play clothes. Tennis shoes/sneakers and socks are best for active play. If your child is wearing a dress, please make sure to put shorts or pants under the dress. When you pick up your child at the end of the day, and their clothes show signs of play, remember they are learning as they play!

### **What to bring**

- Enrollment forms
- Copy of shot records
- Complete change of clothes in a zip lock bag (shirt, shorts/pants/skirt, socks, and underwear). Be sure to write your child's name on each piece of clothing. Give the labeled zip lock bag with clothes to one of the teachers in your child's classroom.
- Nap blanket and crib sheet (this fits over the child's cot).

The center provides all meals, snacks, and school supplies.

### **Illness**

Children who are ill will not be admitted to the center. (see pages 6-7 for Illness Policy).

### **Arrival and Departure**

Plan to arrive between 7:00 am and 9:00 am (Breakfast is at 8:00 or 8:30 am). Children need to be here no later than 9:00 am. Please accompany your child to their classroom. To pick up your child, come to the classroom to call for your child. Be sure to sign your child into Brightwheel each morning and out of Brightwheel each afternoon.

### **Release of Children**

**No child will be released to persons not authorized by a parent or guardian. We must have written authorization for changes in transportation. Persons picking up your child need to have a family security door code, photo identification, as well as the child's Brightwheel check-in code.** If we doubt that the person picking up your child has not been authorized by a parent or guardian, we will not release the child until we contact you.

## **About Our Program**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of See um Smile Playhouse is to provide a safe and caring environment in which every child can play, learn, and grow.

## **Our Philosophy**

Children learn through play and interactions with others. Our goal at See um Smile Playhouse is to promote the healthy growth and development of children and provide support for families by providing high-quality, developmentally appropriate care. Children learn by playing, and they learn best when they're having fun. So, we provide plenty of opportunities to "play" and "have fun" every single day!

## **We encourage children to ...**

- express ideas and feelings creatively through music, movement, dramatic play, art, and language
- explore concepts and develop intellectual curiosity
- learn by using their senses and by moving
- enjoy hands-on experiences with a wide variety of materials

**Families and program staff are partners in supporting the child's development and learning, and we encourage you to be a part of your child's learning.**

## **Curriculum**

Children learn through their senses and by moving. It may not look like school to you, but this is how children learn at an early age. Teachers use play experiences to help children learn skills and concepts. Activities encourage exploration, creativity, and problem-solving. The staff works with children to enhance their learning and development in all areas: social-emotional, physical, language/literacy, and intellectual.

## **Parent/Teacher Conference**

Parent Teacher Conferences are available at your convenience. Please contact the Director to arrange a time that works best for you.

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance is an important part of developing a routine which is important for children. We are a full-time program operating Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. For children to benefit from preschool, they need to be here no later than 9:00 am. You may pick up your child for the day at any time, but we recommend after naptime if possible.

Your child must be signed in and out of Brightwheel daily. Please check your child's cubby daily for notes and your child's artwork and papers. **If your child will be absent or late, please call or**

**message us through Brightwheel.** This is helpful in planning our activities for the day. Please schedule all doctor's appointments towards the end of the day if possible.

We have very little tolerance for late pickup. You will be charged \$5 a minute per child. Please make sure to sign your child in and out of Brightwheel daily. This is a state requirement.

## Tuition

Tuition is due on Fridays for the following week. If your child is absent that day, please arrange for tuition to be dropped off or pay through Brightwheel. **There is no reduction for absences, vacations, holidays, closings due to inclement weather, or closures due to illnesses.**

- There is a \$30 late fee for all late tuition.
- There is a \$30 fee for returned checks.
- **There is a \$40 fee for all failed payments through Brightwheel.**
- There is a \$5 fee for forgotten wipes and diapers.
- There is a \$5 fee for forgotten sheets and blankets.
- There is a \$5 fee for every minute- for late pickup (after 6 pm).
- Enrichment classes are offered for an additional fee, including the Tumble bus.

The center director initiates a child maltreatment and background check on every new employee, as required by state licensing requirements. In addition, references from previous employers are required. All staff members are required to participate in ongoing training in child development and early childhood education.

**If you receive childcare vouchers, you are responsible for paying the amount that is not covered by DHS. If your vouchers are approved and backdated, we will not back pay. We will start the vouchers for the following week. Your child is only allotted a certain amount of days to miss before you are responsible for the payment.**

*The maximum billable absentee days per trimester are as follows:*

Trimester	Days Allowed	Not to Exceed
July – October	12*	6 in a given month**
November – February	16*	8 in a given month**
March – June	12*	6 in a given month**

*\* Days will be pro-rated based on the start date of the authorization.*

*\*\* The Participant reserves the right to charge the client for absentee days that exceed the above limits. TEA clients and foster care clients are exempt from all fees*

*\*\*\* Absentee Days will follow the child per calendar year.*

## Communication

We use several methods to communicate between the Center and your family.

- Talk to your child's teacher at drop-off and pick-up time.
- Communicate with the admin through Brightwheel or schedule a meeting.
- Read posted daily schedules.
- Read special event notices or receive notifications through Brightwheel.
- Read the information on the parent bulletin board or receive notifications through Brightwheel.
- Read the class newsletter that is posted for the week.
- Enjoy the photos, children's work, and other documentation of children's activities.  
These are posted in your child's room, throughout the center, as well as posted on your child's Brightwheel profile.
- Check your child's cubby daily for notices.
- Follow us on Facebook at SeeumSmilePlayhouse.

### **Resources**

We have a resource area in the hall that offers information that may be helpful to parents. We encourage you to take an AR-Kids application if your child does not have health insurance.

### **Developmental resources**

**Our preschool program requires free developmental screenings for all children at See um Smile Playhouse because we are Better Beginnings Level 2.** This is a great opportunity for parents and teachers to be informed of your child's skills necessary for normal development. These skills are vital to your child's educational experiences. We strive to ensure that children meet their full potential. You will receive information regarding your child's screening once it is completed- usually within 3-4 weeks. If your child needs services, we can provide those services at our childcare facility. Feel free to contact us if you have further questions or concerns regarding your child's development.

### **Educational resources**

The center has a small library of books and other online sources on child development and parenting. Topics include behavior guidance, developmental characteristics, and special concerns (going to the hospital; step-parenting, for example). The center director can assist you with these materials and refer you to resources at the public library.

We send home Scholastic book orders from time to time, so you may order books for your child to enjoy at home.

### **Calendar**

We are closed on the following days for holidays. If the actual holiday falls on the weekend, we will close the Friday prior or Monday following. In addition to the following dates, we will have 5-6 in-service days that will be posted on our yearly calendar.

***Labor Day, Thanksgiving (2 days), Christmas (2 days), New Year's, Good Friday, Memorial Day, and Independence Day.***

**There is no reduction in fees for holidays or due to closings for inclement weather.**

### **Weather-related Closings**

When Farmington Schools close due to severe weather, our Center will be closed. Closings will be announced through Brightwheel. If the closing is announced in the middle of the day, please pick up your child immediately.

### **Meetings and Special Events**

Family events will be planned throughout the year. We encourage your family to participate in these activities. Notice of these events will be in the newsletter, and a notification will be sent through Brightwheel.

### **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is not just recess but an extension of our indoor learning opportunities. All children will play outdoors every day, weather permitting. The length of outdoor play times is adjusted according to the weather. Factors such as humidity and wind are considered in determining whether children will be able to play outdoors and how long they will stay out. If children are healthy enough to be at the center, they are healthy enough to go outdoors. Please dress your child for the weather, especially cool mornings in fall and spring. Tennis shoes/sneakers with socks, or other similar shoes, are best for running, climbing, and enjoying the outdoors.

During the enrollment process, parents sign a consent form for sunscreen to be used as needed, we provide sunscreen.

### **Injuries**

Minor injuries will be treated with appropriate first aid, and you will be informed about them through Brightwheel and on an accident report. Accident reports are placed in children's cubbies for parents to pick up. Parents must sign one and leave it for the child's file. You will be called to the center immediately if your child sustains a more serious injury. In cases that we perceive to be potentially life-threatening, we will call an ambulance to transport your child to a medical facility and will direct you to meet the ambulance. All costs for the ambulance and medical fees are the responsibility of the child's family.

### **Immunizations**

Every child in the center must be fully immunized. A photocopy of the child's current immunization record is required at the time of enrollment. Please remember to provide a new

copy if your child receives additional immunizations during the school year. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the termination of your child's enrollment.

### **Illness Policy**

For the good of all children and the teachers, please keep your child at home if he/she is ill. If symptoms appear during the day, we will call you to pick up your child immediately. If your child is exposed to a contagious illness, we will send a notice through Brightwheel. Please let us know if your child has been exposed to a disease away from the center so that we can watch for symptoms.

State health regulations require that children with the following systems be excluded from child care:

- Fever over 101 or 100.4 for infants/ Fever free for 24 hours
- Diarrhea (3 or more watery stools in a 24-hour period)
- Vomiting (2 or more occasions within the past 24 hours)
- Rash that is not obviously associated with diapering, heat, or allergic reactions to medications
- Sore throat if associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck
- Severe coughing leading to gagging, vomiting, or difficulty breathing
- Pink eye
- Untreated scabies, head lice, or the presence of nits
- Multiple sores in the mouth with drooling
- Ringworm
- Impetigo

At no time are parents allowed to mask illnesses by giving their child medications or fever reducers and then bringing them to school. Children need to feel well enough to participate in our activities.

### **Biting Policy**

We understand that biting occurs in young children. We also understand we must keep other children from being hurt. Therefore, we have instituted a biting policy.

- First occurrence - Written notice is provided to the parent of the child that bites and to the parent of the child that was bitten.
- Third occurrence in the same week - The biting child will be sent home for the remainder of the week. A parent conference is scheduled with the child that did the biting and the center director, and resources for the parents will be provided.
- Eighth occurrence in 90 days - The child will be asked to leave the center until the biting phase has ended.

**Meal Information**

We serve a light breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. We participate in the USDA food program for preschools.

Please do not allow your child to bring in food or drinks unless they have enough for everyone!

**Food Allergies**

Please notify your teacher if your child has food allergies. You will need to bring a statement from your child's doctor confirming the food allergy and including any special instructions or emergency procedures. Menu items with equivalent nutritional value will be substituted for allergy-causing foods.

**Rest**

Children are offered an opportunity to rest after lunch. Children have sleeping cots labeled with their names. Children need to bring from home a small blanket, stuffed toy, and a fitted crib sheet (sheet covers cot)

**Emergency Procedures**

Evacuation procedures for fire and other emergencies are practiced periodically. When severe weather is in the area, the director monitors weather reports and alerts staff to be prepared to move children to safety quickly. Emergency procedures are posted in each classroom. The staff knows and periodically reviews procedures for other emergencies, such as an intruder or a shelter-in-place alert.

**Abuse Reporting**

Our teachers are required by state law to report suspected child abuse/maltreatment. This includes non-accidental injuries, such as welts, bruises, cuts, burns, scratches, and broken bones. Suspected sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect are also reported. Child neglect is defined as abandonment, lack of food, utilities, shelter, or lack of supervision. Teachers are trained to recognize indicators of possible abuse. If they fail to report suspected abuse/maltreatment, teachers can be charged with a Class C misdemeanor. Reports are confidential and are considered allegations until an investigation is completed.

**Reporting Child Abuse and Maltreatment**

Under Arkansas Law, our teachers are Mandated Reporters of suspected child abuse/neglect. You may call the Abuse Hotline at 1-800-482-5964 to report any suspected maltreatment or child abuse.

**Reporting Licensing Violations**



You may call the DCCECE Licensing Unit at 501-682-8590 to report any licensing violations.

### **Licensing Violations**

Licensing violations can be found at <https://dhs.arkansas.gov/dccece/cclas/facilitysearch.aspx>.

### **Interviews by DHS and other Agencies**

Any staff member or children in attendance may be interviewed by Child Care Licensing, by the Division of Child and Family Services, and by law enforcement officers for the purpose of investigations or to determine compliance with licensing requirements. Child interviews do not require parental notice or consent.

### **Cubbies**

Children are provided with cubbies as a means of keeping their belongings together. Please check your child's cubby daily for notes, art projects, and other items that need to go home.

### **Toys**

We have many materials for the children to explore. Please encourage your child to leave his/her toys at home. It is often difficult to share a toy with a group, and the toy may get broken. Stuffed animals are excepted from this policy, we allow our children to bring a stuffed animal for nap time.

### **Birthdays**

Your child's birthday is a special occasion to share with friends. If you would like to provide a simple snack for the group, please plan the date in advance with your child's teacher. Outside food must be commercially prepared.

### **Behavior Guidance**

Our goal is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. Our program is designed to promote positive and enjoyable learning experiences and to build trusting respectful relationships. A well-planned schedule, classroom arrangement, curriculum, and well-trained staff, significantly reduce instances of inappropriate behavior. However, when children do make mistakes in behavior, we use the following guidance techniques.

- Tell the child what he/she CAN do
- Give choices whenever possible, but only when the child has a choice
- Support children in learning to solve their own problems and work out conflicts
- Redirect a child to another activity
- Help children learn how to play with friends
- Our staff never uses physical punishment or threats.

### **Limits of Behavior**

- You may not hurt others.
- You may not hurt yourself.
- You may not hurt toys and equipment (families are responsible for payment of destruction of property).

### **Guidance Policy**

At enrollment, parents will be given a copy of our behavior guidance policy. Parents will also sign an acknowledgment that they have been informed of the policy.

### **A Pattern of Inappropriate Behavior**

When a pattern of inappropriate behavior emerges, parents are required to meet with our staff. The goal will be to work together to solve the problem behavior and resolve the difficulty. In some cases, our center may reach out to Better Help to have a behavior specialist come and observe the classroom and provide strategies for the teachers to help modify the inappropriate behavior occurring in the classroom.

### **Transitioning**

As children grow, they may move to a different group within the center. We will work with you to make the transition a positive experience. We will notify you when your child is ready for their new classroom. We will have the child make several visits to their new classroom for two weeks before you receive this notification.

### **Confidentiality**

All information about children and families is considered confidential. Staff members and volunteers will maintain the confidentiality of each family and each child's educational records.

### **Daily Arrivals and Departures**

A parent or authorized adult must accompany children into and out of the center at all times and must sign children in and out of Brightwheel. Arrival and departure times are very busy; for safety, please hold your child's hand in the parking lot. Drop off and pick up times are opportunities to exchange information with our staff. As staff members greet children, parents often have lots of information to give us. Please help us do a good job - if it's important for us to know, write it down in the child's sign-in book.

### **Photographs and Video**

Teachers use tablets to record children's activities and post on students' Brightwheel profiles. Documentation of children's activities is used for families to see what their children are doing in our Center. You will see photographs throughout the center. Videos may be used occasionally

during meetings or special events. Photographs and videos may also be submitted occasionally to the local newspaper and posted on our center website or Facebook to inform the community about our program. Our staff may share photographs and videos with other teachers in professional meetings, classes, and workshops.

During the enrollment process, parents will have an option to sign a release for their children to be included in photographs and videos for use in the facility, Brightwheel, and our website/other social media platforms such as Facebook.

### **Termination**

We hope your child will be with us for many years. However, if, for any reason, you need to remove your child from our program, we require a two weeks notice. If this notice is not received, you will be charged two weeks of additional tuition.

We have the right to terminate without notice for the following reasons:

- Child's behavior is uncontrollable and is at risk to the other children and or staff members.
- The child is not adjusting to the new environment and is not happy
- Fees are not being paid on time
- Director makes a judgment call and feels immediate termination is needed
- A week of absence without notification