**Homeschool Mom (HM) and Valedictorian Christian Academy (VCA)**

**Childcare, School, and Tutoring Services**

**Policies and Procedures**

**Philosophy and Background**

We at HS and VCA respect and appreciate the trust you have placed in our care for your child. As a parent you are the most important person in your child's world and we will make every effort to support you as part of our family.

We will offer the very best care that you can get for your child. You can expect us to cherish your child(ren). You can help us by keeping us informed regarding any health concerns, favorite foods, fears, or special interests. We will share information about your child's growth and activities during the time spent in our program.

We believe that self-esteem, love and cognitive development are critical components to optimal growth in the lives of our children. We take education very serious and begin working with each child from the time they enter (6wks-grade school). We focus on developing the socialization and self-help skills needed to have a positive self-image. The children are given the opportunity to explore, experiment and create in a safe and nurturing environment.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, color, religion, sex, or disability.

**Highlights of my program include:**

1. State Licensed Home (includes multiple inspections yearly). (Pending)
2. 10+ years of experience with newborns to high school children. Current Sub Teacher with the Polk County Schools through Kelly Services.
3. Trained in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid
4. Participation in federally sponsored food program (ensures balanced meals and multiple yearly inspections). (Pending)
5. Participation in Title 20 childcare assistance program through 4C (Pending)
6. Special Curriculum for all children (yes even the infants)
7. Frequent Field Trips
8. Summer Camp
9. Before and After care and Tutoring
10. 24-hour Childcare availability

**Religious and National Holidays**

Parents who might have objections to recognition of religious or other holidays should indicate such objection to us so that proper arrangements can be made to respect your wishes. There may be some closures during national holidays. If you are in need of childcare let us know in advance to see if we can accommodate you and your family for a premium.

**Daily Activities**

**Play Activities:** Children learn a great deal from our daily play activities. Playing with clay, finger painting, drawing, singing, reading books, building with blocks and playing outdoors are typical activities. As some of the activities can be messy, I encourage you to dress your children in comfortable, washable play clothing everyday (leave an extra pair of clothing for those messy days). For finger painting activities, please provide and leave and old adult t-shirt. All children need at least one set of clothing in case of an unexpected accident. Television will be limited to no more than one hour per day of age appropriate educational children's programming unless their lesson requires television. Nap time is offered twice a day for infants and toddlers. Older children will be offered quiet/nap time for a minimum of one hour in the afternoon. Additional nap time will be given if needed by children or required for medical reasons.

There will also be tutoring and homework help in the afternoons. Our toddlers may be sent home with homework assignments meant for you to know and work with them on the things we went over for the day or week. This is not to overwhelm you or your child but for quality time and participation for your children with you!

**Diaper and Toilet Training**

**Diapers:** Changes are scheduled for every 1-2 hours with the exception of nap time, in which case each child will be changed as soon as he or she awakens. In addition, each child will be changed when needed and when being pick up at the end of the day. Parents are to provide the diapers and pull-ups. I will provide the wipes.

**Toilet Training:** I will work with parents to initiate potty training when the child shows interest. Usually, this does not consistently happen before the age of two and frequently closer to the age of three. (A child may show initial interest and then lose interest again for a while. We work when they are ready but encourage it.) If we begin it is very important for the parent to work with us at home so that there is a consistency in the training. In order to be successful in this training, it is important that we are consistent in our techniques. Please discuss potty training with us when you feel your child is ready. Cleanliness and handwashing will be emphasized during the training process.

Behavior Management and Discipline Policy

HS and VCA create an environment that is supportive and respectful of each child's needs. We use different methods of discipline for different situations. Child in our care will not be subject to discipline that is severe, humiliating or frightening. Discipline will not be associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking or any form of corporal punishment is prohibited. Our goal is to help each child develop a strong sense of self-discipline and self-esteem.

Discipline techniques that may be used include positive enforcements, redirection, or a short time-out (for children over the age of two). If a child's behavior does not improve we may take steps such as parent conference to expulsion (rare but could happen). We work hard with our children and believe in the future they have, however, because our space is so limited we accept families who are serious about their child's education as we are. We expect our families to work together with us in building a strong legacy of education for their child!

**Meals and Snacks**

**Nutrition:** Since food and nutrition are important components of a child's development, HS and VCA emphasize fresh and natural foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, homemade soups, whole grain bread, etc. (Pending) We are members of the federally sponsored food program and we are required to submit menus to ensure that your children receive healthy and balance meals are provided.

**Meal Times:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner (for children scheduled to be picked up or dropped off after 6 pm) along with two snacks will be provided. Breakfast is served at 8:00 am, Lunch is served at 12:30 pm. If your child will be arriving after one of the scheduled meals, please feed your child before coming. HS and VCA provides all food required for your child during his or her stay, unless other arrangements are agreed to in writing. Formula for infants is provided on an as needed basis. If there is a special formula, then parents are required to provide. Parents may not bring homemade treat but we welcome store bought snacks for special occasions such as their child's birthdays or events. If treats are brought in, please bring for the full class. Please do not bring latex balloons please.

**Special Diets:**  If a child has a particular dietary need or restriction, it must be substantiated by a medical statement signed by the child's primary physician. This must stay in the child's file. Special meals must be provided by parent unless arrangements are made with us. (this must be approved by the administrator)

**Adjustment Period**

It will take time for your child to learn to love and trust us; we are building a new relationship! Short-term behavior changes and separation anxiety are normal. Feel free to linger during this adjustment period, for your comfort or for your child's. When you do leave, get down on their level, hug and kiss them, say good bye and assure them you will return (but never sneak out). Even if they are crying when you leave, know that they will usually be fine after you leave. Feel free to call us (soon we will have cameras in the class) when you get to work, to "check in" on how your child is doing.

There may be times when your child experiences separation anxiety again after they've been here a while. It may be just a developmental stage they are passing through. Our doors are opened and we can set aside a time to discuss any concerns and solutions to working with your child.

**Illness**

Children will be visually screened as they arrive. If a child exhibits signs of illness, it will be determined if the symptoms indicate the child should be excluded until remedied. In the event the child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the child will be separated from the rest of the children until parent or other authorized person arrives. Your child will not be allowed to return if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms without doctor's clearance:

* Fever of 101 degrees or higher
* Communicable disease
* Diarrhea with three or more watery stools in a 24 hr period
* vomiting on two or more occasions during the past 24 hr
* Draining rashes
* Eye discharge or pinkeye
* Lice or nits
* Too tired or ill to participate in normal activities (signs of being lethargic)

**Medications**

Written consent is required to administer ANY medications. All prescription medications must be in its original containers and properly labeled with the child's name. Your pharmacist may be able to provide you with a separate, properly labeled container of medicine that can be left with us.

**Supply List**

* Infant bag or backpack
* Pampers or Pull-ups
* One or two sets of clothing (including socks)
* Special naptime toy or blankets
* (Bedding and soiled clothing will be sent home to be cleaned unless told otherwise)

**Arrival/Departure**

Entrance: Please enter through the front entrance. For parents picking up their children after hours must call to open doors. Although there are no set speed limits posted we want to think of our children's safety and ride at 15 mph.

**Summary**

All children enrolled are treated with love and respect. They are provided with the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of activities. Our most fundamental objective is to provide your child with a safe, clean and loving environment, in which he or she will feel loved and valued.