



## **Giggles & Smiles Pre-K**

# **STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2024-2025**

Giggles & Smiles Learning Center Phone: 229-380-0406

Giggles & Smiles Learning Center Fax: 229-944-4010

Email

Ms. Bayonne Williams, Project Director, [gsmileslearning@gmail.com](mailto:gsmileslearning@gmail.com)

Ms. Charity Williams, Site Director, [cwgsileslearning@gmail.com](mailto:cwgsileslearning@gmail.com)

# Student & Parent Handbook

## **Mission**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K is committed to providing an exemplary preschool educational program incorporating group and individualized instruction. The program provides children the chance to learn and grow and discover their own individual strengths.

## **Program Overview**

The educational programming in the Giggles & Smiles Pre-K program is based on the belief that children learn through play. Our curriculum is based on a combination of self-selected learning centers and teacher guided educational experiences in the context of whole group, small-group, and individualized learning opportunities. Children are encouraged to develop a positive disposition toward school and learning. The curriculum adheres to The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). More information on current standards is at [www.gelds.decal.ga.gov](http://www.gelds.decal.ga.gov).

## **Statement of Inclusion**

The Giggles & Smiles Pre-K program believes all children have a fundamental right to learn and grow together. Every child, regardless of any individual differences that exist, is welcomed in the program. The program incorporates best practices in early childhood and special education.

## **Values and Beliefs**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K believes all children should be respected and valued. This includes:

- providing an inclusive setting for all children
- establishing and maintaining a play oriented, child centered environment
- employing a developmentally appropriate curriculum
- implementing of best practices
- employing caring and competent professionals

## **Additionally, we believe**

- children must be actively involved in the learning process
- children should be encouraged to demonstrate their individual creative characteristics
- children should be involved in experiences leading to independence, making choices, and discovering learning
- the differences, as well as similarities of individuals should be experienced and celebrated

## **Program Operation**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K program for four-year-olds is a lottery funded Georgia Pre-Kindergarten program. There is no cost to attend this program. Enrollment is based on a first-come, first served selection process. A maximum of twenty children can participate in this full-day (6.5 hours) program, 180 days, in one classroom. All children must be four years of age on or before September 1 of the participating year to qualify for admission.

## General Information and Policies

### Enrollment

Enrollment in the program is based on the following priorities: GSLC staff and then community applicants. Children may be placed on an interest list prior to their preschool enrollment year. Parents of children on the waiting list are notified in February/March of the enrollment year in which their child qualifies and is given acceptance priority. An open-enrollment period before the academic year of enrollment is announced in February/March for remaining slots in the preschool program. Children are considered enrolled when ALL application materials are completed and on file with the Pre-K. Placement of siblings will be in the same classroom.

### Registration Information

In order to be served by Giggles & Smiles Pre-K, the primary caregiver must complete and provide the following:

- Registration form
- Parental agreement form
- Current Georgia Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization Form #3231 with the date of expiration or school attendance block checked and proof of Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib) vaccination
- Birth Certificate
- Current Certificate of Eye, Ear, Dental, and Nutrition Examinations, Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3300
- Pre-K Student Information Form
- Proof of Residency
- Social Security Card (School will provide waiver form if necessary)

A copy of a child's Social Security card is needed to enroll children with the state pre-k funding agency. Parents who cannot provide a copy of the card or who are in the process of obtaining a card must sign the appropriate form provided by the Project/Site Director.

### Residency Requirement

The child must be a Georgia resident. For purposes of this program, a Georgia resident is defined as a child who resides in the state of Georgia. **Proof of residency should be part of a child's on-site file prior to or on the first day of Pre-K.** Examples of proof of residency include the following: current lease, property tax notice, homeowner's insurance bill, mortgage statement, current vehicle registration form, letter from shelter, letter from employer if employer provides housing, any utility bill listing the residence as the service address, and current PeachCare eligibility documents for the child. A cellphone bill or a driver's license is **not** an acceptable proof of residency. If a student's family is living with someone else, parents should provide a notarized affidavit from the property owner stating where the child's family is residing, plus a copy of the property owner's proof of residency (any items listed above). Active duty military families can support Georgia residency with a copy of official military orders verifying Georgia residency during the school year.

**If residency is not verified, a child cannot participate in the state lottery funded PreK program.**

### **Health Services**

Health screenings are necessary for Georgia's Pre-K students so that any problems that might interfere with the child's ability to learn can be identified and addressed as soon as possible. Parents are asked the date of the child's last health exam as a means of meeting requirements recommendations from the state agency that oversees the Pre-K program. Additional verification is required for Category One Children. The Georgia Department of Community Health guidelines require that any child eligible for Medicaid or Peachcare receive a full health exam at ages four and give. Therefore, our program is required to verify that Category One children have received their full health exam upon entering Georgia's Pre-K. Appropriate referrals and follow-ups to parents of Category One children who have not received a full health exam are given. If a Category One child continues to attend the program without a full health exam, our Pre-K specialist is notified.

All children attending Georgia's Pre-K Program must have a Certificate of Eye, Ear and Dental Examinations (Georgia Department of Human Services Form 3300) and a DHS Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231). Form 3300 must have been conducted within 12 months prior to the start of the Pre-K program. Form 3231 must have either the *date of expiration* or *school attendance* block checked. Children who attend Pre-K must be up-to-date on all immunizations required for school entry. Children may register and begin attending before completion of these examinations and certificates. However, the Certificate of Eye, Ear and Dental Examination must be on file within 90 calendar days of the start of the Pre-K program. The immunization certificate must be on file within 30 calendar days of the start of the Pre-K program. Expired certificates must be updated within 30 calendar days of the expiration date.

Any child who does not have a completed certificate within the 30 or 90 calendar day time frames should be asked not to return to the program until an updated certificate is provided and is on-site. A child who presents a valid appointment card for either a 3231 or 3300 appointment can remain in the program until the date of the appointment.

If Form 3300 is marked Needs Further Professional Examination, families have to take child/children to a professional for a more detailed evaluation. Documentation of follow up visit must be provided (i.e., updated certificate, doctor's note, schedule appointment card).

### **Immunization Exemptions**

A medical exemption must be marked on Form 3231. A letter from a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant attached to the certificate will not be accepted as a medical exemption. It must be marked on the certificate. Medical exemptions are valid for a one-year period.

Families may object to vaccinations on religious grounds by filing an affidavit noting their objection. The only affidavit that may be used to register a religious objection to required vaccinations is the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) Form 2208. Religious affidavits must be notarized and kept on file. The affidavit does not expire.

### **Support Services**

Bright from the Start provides children and families with access, if you request it, to services that will better prepare your child for school. Please contact the Project Director for additional information regarding eligibility requirements.

The director may ask for information about your family income or other government services you receive. Supplying this information is not required for entrance in Pre-K, but may be required to help them determine your eligibility for some services. This information will be kept confidential. It will not be made available to anyone who is not directly involved in providing financial assistance or auditing records.

### **Children with Disabilities**

If a child is assessed and determined eligible for special education services, dual enrollment in public school system preschool special education classes and Georgia's Pre-K program is permitted.

### **Transportation**

Giggles & Smiles Learning Center will not provide transportation to and from school for enrolled Pre-K children.

### **Nutrition Program**

All students in the Giggles & Smiles Pre-K are served breakfast, lunch, and a snack free of charge. A child's food allergy must be listed in the enrollment packet. If your child develops any allergies, please notify the center. Children are not allowed to bring food items unless they have a doctor's note stating they have special dietary needs, restrictions and/or allergies. For children with special dietary needs, they may bring their own lunch and snack from home when they are dropped off in the morning. Parents are not allowed to bring food during the day for students. A child's lunch and/or snack may be kept in a sack or lunchbox in the child's cubby. Children **are not** allowed to bring food items that need to be heated in a microwave or refrigerated. Because of the time involved, the following guidelines should be followed concerning meals:

- Cold packs inside of lunchbox or sack can be used to keep lunches/drinks cool
- Provide condiments to meals that require condiments

For sanitary considerations, children are not allowed to share food.

### **Giggles & Smiles Learning Center Afterschool Program**

Giggles & Smiles Learning Center provides an After School Program at the center. Hours of operation are from the time of school dismissal until 6:00 P.M. The After School Program is \$50 per week. Families who meet income and activity requirements may qualify to receive financial assistance with the cost of extended day services through the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program. Parents who are interested in these services may contact the center director at 380-0406.

### **Classroom Settings, Learning Areas, Teaching Methods**

Pre-K Classrooms have learning areas or “centers” set-up in the classroom, and each center is supplied with books, materials, and learning activities. Typical learning centers in a Pre-K classroom might include math, blocks, reading, art, science, dramatic play, writing, and music. The learning centers are designed to promote various developmental skills in eight areas:

- Language and Literacy
- Math Development
- Science Development
- Social Studies Development
- Creative Development
- Physical and Health Development
- Social Emotional Development
- Approaches to Play and Learning

The Pre-K classroom has ample space to accommodate individual, small, and large group instruction.

Teachers interact with children and move about the classroom to facilitate learning experiences. You can find a copy of a daily schedule posted outside of the classroom. The Pre-K schedule allows for daily story times, outside time, rest time, instruction in the learning centers and in large and small groups.

### **Curriculum**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K program will use a curriculum that has been approved by Bright from the Start. Each curriculum is used to support children to reach age appropriate learning goals. All approved curricula are aligned with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). GELDS provide the basis for instruction in the Pre-K classroom. It ensures that children develop skills in language and literacy, math, science, social studies, creative, health and physical, and social and emotional areas.

### **Parent Agreement**

A parent must agree to send the child to the Pre-K program for 6.5 hours of instructional time for the full school year. A child who is chronically tardy or absent can be disenrolled from the program. A child who is not picked up at the end of the Pre-K day on a regular basis can be disenrolled.

### **Attendance Information**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K serves as a model demonstration program for Giggles & Smiles Learning Center. The preschool school year is aligned with school calendars of area schools. The projected days of operation for each year are supplied in advance to allow parents to plan alternative childcare options. The hours of operation are from 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM, Monday through Friday for the Giggles & Smiles Pre-K students. Children may be dropped off between 7:50 AM and 8:10 AM. No students may be dropped off before 7:50 AM unless they have paid for the Early Bird Arrival (\$30 per week). Afternoon dismissal begins at 2:30 PM and students must be picked up by 2:40 PM. Students may not be checked out after 2:00 PM.

Children should be in the classroom by 8:10 AM. If a student is entering the building after 8:10 AM, a parent/guardian is required to walk the student in the building and check in at the front desk to get a tardy slip. Children arriving after 8:10 AM will be marked tardy in order to benefit from the daily curriculum and must attend regularly to maintain their enrollment. Besides being disruptive to the class, children arriving late and leaving early can have a difficult time keeping up and understanding what is expected of them. Attendance records for children start in Pre-K and these records become part of the child's permanent record.

**Chronic tardiness is defined as late arrival more than once per week.** A child is considered tardy at 8:10 AM.

**Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than two days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation and/or early departure more than once a week.** Chronic tardiness or absenteeism may also be defined by an established regular attendance pattern, for example, if a child is late every Tuesday or absent every Wednesday or leaves early every Monday.

Students who are chronically late and/or absent are in danger of being disenrolled.

#### **Consecutive Absenteeism**

Children who do not attend class for 10 consecutive days without medical or other reasonable explanation will be removed from the roster.

Students who have an excused absence shall present a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian within five (5) days of returning to school. Failure to present an excuse within five (5) days of returning to school shall result in an unexcused absence. Excuses may not be sent by FAX or email. The Project/Site Director will determine whether or not an absence is excused, and may, at his/her discretion, require supporting documentation from doctor, dentist, clinic, court, funeral home, etc. in order to make this determination. Students shall be given a reasonable opportunity to make up work or tests when they have documented their excused absence from school within five (5) days of their return to school. Students suspended from school will be considered to be absent.

After three unexcused absences or tardies, a letter is sent to parents concerning attendance. At five unexcused absences or tardies, the Project/Site Director will be contacted and parents will receive a letter from the Project/Site Director and a copy is maintained in the child's file. At six unexcused absences or tardies, the Project/Site Director will hold a conference with the parents concerning the absences and/or tardies. If the problem with absences/tardies continues, the student(s) will be in danger of being disenrolled.

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K emphasizes the value of regular attendance in enabling students to benefit from the school program.

The following guidelines are in place and enforced for students in Pre-K:

- Students should attend every day unless ill.
- Students must come to school on time.

- A written excuse should be given to the teacher when a child is absent stating the reason for the absence.
- Any student who is absent more than 10 days in a row without medical or other reasons must be removed from the Pre-K enrollment and may no longer attend.  
Any student with excessive tardiness (2 weeks consecutively) must be removed from the Pre-K enrollment and can no longer attend.

### **Dis-Enrollment**

Children may be dis-enrolled from the Georgia's Pre-K Program if they are hurting themselves or others and/or are chronically disruptive to the extent that they are not benefiting from the Pre-K program. Families will be given assistance in obtaining resources to help the child benefit from the program, including assessment referral and treatment options. Disenrollment of a child for behavior reasons is the last step taken after all other attempts to help the child within the program have been exhausted.

### **Program Employees**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K employees consist of the Program/Site Director, one certified lead-teacher, and one assistant teacher.

### **Orientation**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K will provide an opportunity for families to meet teachers and staff and to provide written policies and procedures. Families will receive a yearly calendar and agree to the terms and conditions of Giggles & Smiles Pre-K.

### **Field Trips**

Children's learning is facilitated and enriched through participating in a variety of field trips and planned special events related to ongoing studies and content standards. Field trips of educational value will be scheduled by teachers occasionally throughout the school year. Field trips are chaperoned by members of the faculty and staff, and open to parents when space is available. Giggles & Smiles Learning Center provides transportation for field trips when directly related to education purposes. Parental or guardian consent is required in order for students to attend field trips. No child will be allowed to attend a trip without parent/guardian permission. If your child fails to return his/her permission slip, he/she will not be allowed to attend. All field trips are closely supervised. Parents who accompany and/or participate with their Pre-K children must make other arrangements for siblings who are not enrolled in the program unless the field trips/special events are designated as family events. Children are expected to participate with their class on field trips even if a parent or guardian is attending. The Pre-K program will request a per child donation per field trip. Donations requested will not exceed a total of \$25 per child per year. Donations requested will not exceed a total of \$25 per child per year. Parents/guardians must cover their own expenses for field trips. Students may not be allowed to go on field trips if their behavior at school does not warrant their attendance. **Please note that students may not be denied the opportunity to participate in a field trip on the basis of discipline for behavior at home.**

### **Classroom Visitation**

Parent involvement is encouraged; however, visitation to the Pre-K classroom will be limited to non-instructional time. For the protection and safety of the children, all parents and visitors are required to report directly to the front desk.

### **Procure**

Communication is an essential part of the educational program. We feel it is very important for parents to keep in close contact with their child's teacher(s) concerning his/her progress. Therefore, Giggles & Smiles Pre-K will use the Procure system as a communication system. Parents are notified of: absences, behavior, schedule of school events, invitation to meetings, cancellations of school, and other important school information.

### **Communication**

We encourage parents to inform the staff of any situation that may affect the effectiveness of the school experience for a child. Family members are asked to write down any messages to staff and leave them in the morning. Although teachers would like to talk with families about their child's day, the arrival and departure time for children are the busiest times of the teachers. Parents are asked not to use this time to discuss questions or problems concerning the Pre-K or their child. Parent-Teacher conferences or phone conversations can be scheduled upon request. Of course, if parents have issues that must be addressed immediately, they can ask the Project Director or Site Director to secure additional supervision so that you may meet with them privately.

Families should check their child's bag and Procure. On Wednesdays, there will be samples of your child's work, assignment sheets, and other important information regarding your child's progress and needs placed in a take-home folder. Since the folder will contain important information about your child and upcoming events at school, it is very important that you check for this folder each week. Please review all the contents of the folder carefully, and sign, noting you have reviewed the work and/or notices sent. Please return the signed contents the next school day.

### **Pre-K Child Assessment**

Georgia's Pre-K Program uses a statewide assessment for four-year-olds. It is called the Work Sampling System (WSS). WSS assesses the level of performance for each child in the program. It is an assessment completed in the classroom by the teacher as children engage in their routine daily activities throughout the school year. Teachers observe and record student performance every day. They collect student work samples that show development and growth over time.

Teachers use this data to complete a Developmental Checklist and upload the information into an online portfolio for each child. The Developmental Checklist includes sixty-nine performance indicators under seven domains of learning (language/literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, social/emotional development, health and physical development, and the arts). Information from the checklist is used to determine each individual child's performance level and school readiness. The information is then reported on the Narrative Summary Report that teachers share with parents.

### **Parent Teacher Conferences**

Teachers are available for conferences, by appointment, during planning time and after school. Teachers will not be permitted to see parents during instructional time. Parents are strongly encouraged to call and set up an appointment if a conference is requested. Please call the center at 229-380-0406 if you wish to set up a conference.

Parents will be asked to attend conferences throughout the school year. Parents should plan to meet with their child's teacher(s) at least twice during the school year.

Teachers notify parents, in writing, of significant or special events happening at the Pre-K. Telephoning is the least effective method for parents to communicate with teachers from 7:50 AM - 2:40 PM. Obviously, the faculty is working with the children and cannot answer the phone. However, parents can leave messages for the faculty or send a Procure message. Calls will be returned after the children leave school each day. If parents have an emergency, please call 229-380-0406 to get a message to the classroom.

Discussions about a child's attendance, behavior, educational progress, etc. are only discussed with the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

### **Homework**

Please also plan to read to or with your child for 15-20 minutes each night.

### **Children of Military Families**

A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five additional school days per school year, for days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave. Families shall provide a written statement for the child's file to document the absence.

### **Waiting List**

Giggles & Smiles Pre-K will have a waiting list for students who are unable to attend due to full enrollment. All families asking to be placed on the waiting list must complete appropriate forms provided by the Project/Site Director.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

**\*Birthday parties can only be attended by the teachers, children, and parents only.**

We are excited to celebrate a child's birthday with his/her parents or legal guardian. However, elaborate celebrations become disruptive to the on-going educational programming in the center. If a parent or legal guardian would like to bring a cake or cupcakes on a child's birthday, we will be pleased to recognize your child's special day. Party favors are not permitted. Birthday parties will be at the end of the day at 2:00 PM. Please contact your child's teacher to make party arrangements.

### **Rest Time**

Children participating in the Georgia Pre-K will have a maximum of a one hour rest time. The child is assigned a cot, but each child should bring a blanket to cover themselves during nap time. A child may also bring a small stuffed animal or other soft toy for this time. These items are kept in individual cubbies and sent home at the end of the week for laundering. If a child brings a stuffed animal, please label it with the child's name. Giggles & Smiles Learning Center is not responsible for lost or broken items. We strongly recommend not sending the most favorite stuffed animal that is needed to sleep at night.

### **Car Rider Procedures – Morning & Afternoon**

Safety of our children is our utmost concern; therefore, we need the cooperation and patience of all adults. As a reminder, all visitors must sign-in at the front desk. Please do not park your car in the areas designated for traffic flow. Please look for school staff to help direct traffic flow.

### **Morning Drop-Off**

Our school building opens at 7:50 A.M. for student drop-off. Students will not be allowed in the building before this time. Please do not allow your child to exit your car until 7:50 A.M. We want your child to be supervised at all times when on our grounds. We cannot supervise students before 7:50 A.M. If you wish to walk your child into the building, please park in the parking lot beside the center and enter through the main entrance. The left lane is for drop-off. Please pull up to the end of the covered walkway to keep traffic moving. A staff member will help with directing traffic flow. Please make sure your child is ready to exit the car once you stop. If you need to sign papers or give money, etc., please park in the parking spaces and escort your child into the building. The left lane is for thru traffic. **STUDENTS ARRIVING AFTER 8:10 A.M. MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN WHO WILL BE REQUIRED TO GET A TARDY SLIP.**

### **Afternoon Pick-Up**

Once the line of cars reaches the walkway in front of the building, a staff member will direct you to make the left lane active in the afternoon. Remain in your car and in line. Your child will be brought to your car.

### **Arrival and Dismissal of Children**

Arrival: If a parent needs to pick up a child earlier than the regular dismissal time, the parent should notify the faculty so a child's belongings are ready. After 2:00 PM, early dismissal is not allowed without a doctor's excuse. Consistent early departure is discouraged because it disrupts the child's participation in the educational activities of the day. Dismissal is an important time for reviewing the day's activities and preparing children for the exciting learning that will take place the next day.

During the first week of school, parents and other drivers at dismissal may be asked to show identification. Only parents, guardians, those people listed on the Student Registration Form may walk their child into the center and to their classroom. Only parents, guardians, and those people listed on the Student Registration Form (completed at Open House) may check out children and must present an ID. They must sign the child out on the appropriate form at the front desk. If someone new is picking up the child, it is the parent's responsibility to provide written permission. Children will not be released to anyone not authorized to pick them up.

### **Late Pick-Up of Children**

Children should be picked up from Pre-K between 2:30 PM and 2:40 PM for Dismissal. Giggles & Smiles Pre-K does provide extended care. Space is limited. Children who are not signed up for the extended care program and left at the center will be charged a fee of \$1.00 per minute beyond 2:40 PM. Fee is used to pay for babysitting and administrative costs.

If a child has not been picked-up and/or contact with a parent or authorized person on the pick-up list cannot be made prior to 3:00 PM, the sheriff's office and Department of Family and Children's Services will be notified.

**Chronic late pick-up (more than once a week) may result in dismissal from the program due to Bright From The Start protocol.**

### **Parent Attire**

Giggles & Smiles Learning Center is a childcare provider. Parents are asked to dress appropriately when they bring children to school and when they pick them up at the end of the day. Parents are asked to not wear pajamas/undergarments when bringing children to school.

### **Cell Phones**

Electronic communication devices are prohibited during the school day. Devices will be confiscated and given back at the end of the school day. The school is not responsible for any item that is confiscated, lost or stolen.

### **Electronic Devices**

All electronic or communication devices should be left at home. These devices will not be allowed in classes or at school events without permission. Any item that disrupts the instructional day should not be brought to school and will be confiscated. Confiscated items will be turned in to the front desk. The school will not be responsible for any electronic devices that are lost or stolen.

### **Computer Use**

Students will be allowed to use computer technology for educational purposes. Unacceptable uses of the computer technology will result in revoking these privileges for 30 school days for the first offense. On the second offense, privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the school year. Any violations will be documented in the student's file. Users must adhere to all copyright laws. Additionally, access to the Internet and computer resources is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, users violating the Giggles & Smiles Learning Center's acceptable use policy shall be subject to revocation of these privileges and potential disciplinary action.

### **Release of Children**

Children are only released to authorized individuals listed on their emergency contact list. The emergency contact list will be completed at Open House. Identification is required of those authorized individuals who are unfamiliar to the staff. If emergency change must be made, caregivers must phone or send a written note to the Center to inform the teacher of the change.

In the interest of every child's wellbeing, children who have symptoms of illness, such as an elevated temperature (greater than 99°), vomiting, diarrhea, eye discharge or pink eye, lice, severe cold and/or runny nose, or a draining rash are required to stay home. The child must be free from illness for 24 hours before returning to school. In the case of lice, a note from a practicing physician will be required stating that lice are no longer present. If symptoms of illness are observed at the Pre-K, the child will be isolated, and a parent will be notified to pick up the child.

For minor injuries, such as scraped knees, basic first aid procedures are used.

If no one can be reached in a critical emergency, the child will be transported to the hospital. Please make sure you keep your contact information updated.

### **Deliveries**

No flowers, balloons, or other gifts will be delivered to students during the school day.

### **Disaster Drills**

Monthly disaster drills (for example, fire drills, lock down drills, and/or tornado drills) will be scheduled during the school year and should be respected for the protection of life. Instructions are posted in all classrooms and teachers will inform students of proper procedures for evacuating the building.

### **Sale of Other Items At School**

Students or student organizations and groups may not sell items on the center's property without permission from the Center Director.

### **Unscheduled Closing**

In the case of severe weather, structural damage, and/or other circumstances that may be deemed unsafe for children and/or teachers, the Project Director will make the decision if it is necessary for Giggles & Smiles Pre-K to close and notify families. Any other unscheduled closings will be reported to families as soon as possible through written notice, telephone communication, and/or Procure. Make-up days may be required for days missed due to weather. Of course, if parents feel it is unsafe to travel to Giggles & Smiles Learning Center due to weather, they should not do so. Children travel to Giggles & Smiles Learning Center from several surrounding counties, and weather can vary at different locations.

### **Visitors**

All visitors must report to the front desk and sign in upon entering the center. A driver's license must be presented at sign-in. We request that all visitors refrain from talking on their cell phone while in the building.

### **Child Abuse Law**

State law requires all caregivers of children to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family and Children Services.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

The following procedures will be followed by Giggles & Smiles Pre-K concerning disciplinary actions. Disciplinary actions will be followed if a student at the Giggles & Smiles Pre-K participates in any behavior that is disruptive to the learning atmosphere (for example, but not limited to: use of inappropriate language or profanity, causing harm to other children and/or teachers, causing harm to Giggles & Smiles property, etc.)

**1st Offense:** A note will be sent home by the classroom teacher. Project/Site Director will be notified of the offense. Documentation of the event will be filed in the child's folder.

**2nd Offense:** Parents will be contacted by the classroom teacher and the Project/Site Director. Documentation of the event will be filed in the child's folder.

**3rd Offense:** Parents will be contacted by the Project/Site Director. The child/children involved in the incident will be removed from the classroom setting and sent home for the remainder of the school day. Parents will be contacted and asked to pick their child up immediately from school. A parent conference with the parents, classroom teacher, and Project/Site director will be scheduled to set up a plan of action to insure the behavior does not continue in the school setting. Documentation of the incident and the conference will be filed in the child's folder. The Project/Site Director will be informed of the situation.

**4th Offense:** Parents will be contacted by the Project/Site Director. The child/children involved in the incident will be removed and suspended from the classroom setting. The total number of days suspended will be determined by the Project/Site Director.

### **Immediate Suspension**

An immediate suspension for up to two (2) days can be made at any time the Pre-K provider determines a child is causing harm to himself/herself, the classroom teachers, or other children. Parents will be contacted immediately in this situation by the Project/Site Director. A parent/teacher conference will also be held to discuss strategies and options to improve behavioral issues.

### **Extended Suspension**

An extended suspension (i.e., more than two days at a time and/or more than five days total) may occur in the following instances:

- Chronically disruptive
- Represents a documented habitual pattern of behavior
- Repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the other students to learn; and/or causing harm to himself/herself or others
- Involves three (3) or more incidents of aggression that could cause serious injury and significant property damage or destruction

### **Health and Safety Procedures**

The following health and safety procedures are followed:

- Fire and tornado drills are conducted regularly. Evacuation routes are posted in each of the classrooms.
- The Center maintains a first aid kit.
- The staff washes their hands frequently and appropriately as children are nurtured and handled.

### **Clothing**

Children should be dressed appropriately for play. Clothing should be sturdy, washable, and comfortable. Children will often have contact with activities involving water, sand, and paint and should wear clothing appropriate for these activities. Children should wear appropriate footwear. Inappropriate footwear is the cause of many accidents. Flips flops, backless sandals, and slides are not allowed. Sleeveless shirts are not allowed. Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be fingertip length.

A complete change of clothing (it is best to include two sets of underwear and socks) labeled with the child's name and placed in a Ziploc bag needs to be left at school. If a child's clothing becomes soiled, the child will change into the provided clothing and the soiled clothes will be placed in the Ziploc bag and placed in the child's cubby to be taken home. If a child needs extensive cleaning to be comfortable in the classroom, parents are notified to come to the Pre-K. Clothing should be seasonable and fit the child.

### **Withdrawals**

A parent must notify school if a student is to withdraw for any reason.

### **Belongings**

All personal possessions should be labeled with the child's name. Toys, candy, gum, jewelry, make-up, purses, large stuffed animals and money ARE NOT PERMITTED. Toys from home tend to get lost or damaged and cause problems among the children.

The classroom teacher will establish a sharing time on specific days during the school year. On those days' children may bring books, music, trip souvenirs, nature items or some item of educational interest. Toy weapons are not allowed in the Center under any circumstances.

### **Pictures**

Individual and group pictures are made during the school year. These pictures are available for purchase; however, a purchase is not required to have a child's picture taken.

### **Telephone Messaging**

Students will not be allowed to use the center's telephone except in cases of an emergency. Students will not be called out of class to use the telephone. Messages for students will be accepted ONLY in cases of an emergency. All requests for transportation changes must be submitted in writing. **FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN, NO REQUESTS FOR TRANSPORTATION CHANGES WILL BE TAKEN OVER THE TELEPHONE.** *This is non-negotiable.* Please make plans accordingly. These changes must be made in person or in writing.

### **Photographing/Videotaping**

Sometimes photographs and/or videotapes are made of children working in the Pre-K for advertisement or educational purposes. Parents can choose to sign an authorization allowing Giggles & Smiles Learning Center to photograph/videotape enrolled children. If you do not want your child photographed for any reason, please take the following three steps:

1. Return the Photograph/Videotape Release form located in the registration packet with your signature, the date, the child's name and provider's name on it. Be sure to write NO on the form.

2. Tell your child that if someone comes to take his/her picture, he/she must inform that person or the teacher that they would prefer not to have his/her picture taken.

3. Keep track of the center's webpage and social media. If for some reason your child is photographed despite the above-mentioned precautions, please notify the center and we will have the picture removed immediately.

Please refrain from taking pictures of other children during your visit. We will have several opportunities throughout the year to purchase photos as fundraisers.

Student teachers from universities assigned to classrooms in our buildings must video record themselves for the purposes of portfolio documentation. You will receive a release form if this applies to your child's class.

The website [decal.ga.gov](http://decal.ga.gov) has a wealth of information for parents who have children in the Pre-K program. Refer to [www.decal.ga.gov](http://www.decal.ga.gov) for Pre-K parent postings and a family handbook.