

Mill Creek Academy



Parent Handbook

Version 8/13/10

Contents

Welcome

About Us

School Hours/Holiday Schedule

Inclement Weather

Our Programs

Elementary School Transportation

Admission Requirements

Records

Tuition Plan

Absence & Withdrawal Policies

Getting Settled In

Drop Off/Pick-Up Procedures

Your Child's Personal Items

Spare Clothing Policy

Guidance & Discipline

Parent-Teacher Communication

Medicine Administration

Our Symptom Free Policy

Parental Notification of Illness/Injury

Emergency Situations

Welcome!

We are so excited that you have chosen Mill Creek Academy for your child! Our goal each and every day is to bring happiness, security and education into his or her world. It is a great honor to play such a large part in the lives of these children and we take that responsibility very seriously.

About Us

Kelly Cobb

Kelly and her husband Rob are Atlanta natives who have lived in Gwinnett County for the past 25 years. They have two sons - Alex, and Adam. Kelly has 18 years of experience as a Teacher in Gwinnett County. She has taught Kindergarten through 2nd grade. and has her masters in early childhood education. She uses her experience to enhance the curriculum and scheduling in our classrooms.

Lynne Cobb

Lynne and her husband Randy are also Atlanta natives who have lived in Gwinnett County for 19 years. They have three daughters - Lindsey, Rachel, and Sarah. Lynne worked for 10 years as a senior director at the operations headquarters for an international hotel chain. She brings with her the business sense to keep things running smoothly at Mill Creek Academy.

Since we have both worked full-time throughout our children's lives, we understand the significance of providing a healthy, safe, fun environment for your child. Leaving our precious children every day is one of the hardest things parents have to do. Through Mill Creek Academy, we have the opportunity to take care of your children the same way we would take care of our own. It is a privilege for us to assure you that you will be provided with the highest quality of childcare. Thank you for the opportunity, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that your child is happy and safe.

- Kelly and Lynne

School Hours/Holiday Schedule

Due to the fact that we pay our teachers for holidays, the charge for holiday weeks will be the same as regular weeks.

Monday - Friday 6:30 AM - 6:30 PM

School Closed

New Year's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Friday after Thanksgiving

2 Days @ Christmas

Inclement Weather

In the case of an emergency due to inclement weather (e.g. snow or ice storm), please call MCA to check on a possible delayed opening or closing.

We will do everything possible to remain open, but in the event that severe weather conditions compromise the safety of our children and our teachers, we react accordingly.

In the event of school closures because of inclement weather, we will follow the decision that is made by Gwinnett County. In addition, if Gwinnett County schools close early because of emergency weather conditions, we will close. **In this case, transportation for kids in our before/after school programs will become the parents' responsibility.** You will need to arrange for your child to be picked up directly from their school. Please listen to 11 Alive or log on to 11alive.com for the latest and fastest information on Gwinnett County school closings.

Our Programs

<u>Class Name</u>	<u>Age Group (Approx.)</u>	<u>Teacher to Child Ratio</u>
Infants	6 wks - 6 mos	1 to 4
Crawlers	6 mos - 12 mos	1 to 4
Ones	12 - 20 mos	1 to 6
Twos	20 mos. - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ yrs.	1 to 8
Threes	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ yrs.	1 to 10
Fours	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 4 yrs.	1 to 12
State Pre-K	Must be 4 yrs. by Aug. 31 st	1 to 15

After School Program:

Youngs	4 & 5 yrs.	1 to 15
Juniors	K - 2 nd grade	1 to 15
Seniors	3 rd and up	1 to 15

***The High Reach Curriculum is used in our classrooms**

Before/After School Program:

We provide both before and after school programs for children who attend certain local elementary schools in our area. Before we transport them to school, they are served breakfast. After school we provide an afternoon snack.

Our after school program has separate classrooms, based on age. This is a unique feature of our program, compared to other centers. Age division allows children to play in their own age group and engage in age appropriate activities.

Your child will have a place to do homework, and a teacher is there to assist them if they need help. We also offer fun rotations of activities in the afternoon such as art, board games, video games, reading and outdoor activities including basketball, soccer, play sets, slides, etc.

Summer Camp

Each year, Mill Creek Academy will provide a fun-filled summer of field trips and special visitors for school aged kids. Finalized calendars will be available each Spring for our Summer Camp.

Elementary School Transportation

Mill Creek Academy will provide transportation to and from certain local elementary schools. If we must discontinue pick-up at one of these schools because of conflicting arrival/departure times, we will give parents a two-week notice. Parents must sign a permission form for transportation.

Each parent will also fill out a vehicle emergency medical form that will be kept on the bus during transportation of the children enrolled in our center.

If, by some unforeseen circumstance, the elementary school is not open in the morning, during drop-off, we will return the children to the center and notify parents.

Parents are required to notify Mill Creek Academy if their child will not be riding our bus during afternoon pick-up. This is extremely important.



Admission Requirements

A copy of your enrollment application and agreement will remain within the files of Mill Creek Academy, as long as your child remains actively enrolled at the school, and it shall be available for inspection by the parent at any time upon request.

In order to comply with state law, it will be necessary for the parent or guardian to supply Mill Creek Academy with a physician's immunization form (Form 3231) no later than one week after the date of actual attendance begins. Regular updated reports will be required as they are due.

Initial and continued enrollment will be at the discretion of Mill Creek Academy based upon the best interests of the child, the expectation that he/she will benefit from the program, and the welfare of the other enrolled children. Enrollment shall be without regard to race, creed, sex or national origin.

Records

The parent is required by state law to update information furnished herein as necessary, with changes initialed and dated by the parent and the director. Parents agree to notify the school of any change in phone numbers, work locations, emergency phone numbers, family physician, etc.

In the event that special custody arrangements exist, legal court documents must be provided to Mill Creek Academy. The law requires that custody papers be on file at the school should it become necessary to obtain the help of the authorities in attempting to prevent a parent who does not have custody of a child from picking up that child.

Tuition Plan

An annual registration fee of \$60.00 per child or \$100.00 per family is required at the time of enrollment. **This fee is yearly thereafter and payable by the beginning of each school year.**

Tuition is due every Monday, and includes breakfast, lunch, snack and baby wipes. A late payment fee of \$15 is automatically charged if the tuition is not paid by closing on Monday. If an account is past due, your child may be withdrawn from Mill Creek Academy and will not be allowed to return. Your account will be turned into collections, which report to 3 major credit bureaus. The returned check fee is \$25, and may result in a cash only basis. There will be a 5% discount given for paying the entire month's tuition at the beginning of the month. Payments are due by the first school day of the month in order to receive this discount. A 10% discount is offered for the oldest sibling.

We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover, Flex Spend Cards, and debit cards for payment. Picking your child up late will result in a fee applied at the rate of \$5 for the first minute, and \$1 a minute thereafter. Fee is due that day.

Absence & Withdrawal Policies

In order to ensure proper staffing, your tuition is due even when your child is absent. Parents should give written notification to the director two weeks prior to a child's planned vacation. Each child shall be granted one weeks vacation per year at no charge.

The obligation for full payment of tuition and other fees will continue until the date indicated by the parent as the date of withdrawal. The parent agrees to furnish Mill Creek Academy with at least two weeks advance written notice of such date of withdrawal. If the parent fails to provide written notice, he/she remains responsible for the full tuition for the two weeks after the child's last day of attendance plus any late charges or penalties, which shall accrue until full payment is received.

Getting Settled In

The adjustment period into a new situation can be exciting, but stressful for both parent and child. Allow yourselves some time to get comfortable with the new faces, new setting and routines. The following are some suggestions that might help you and your child settle in.

- ❖ Be positive and reassuring. Smile and look comfortable. Let your child know that the teachers will take good care of him, that he will get to play and have lots of fun, and that you will be back soon.
- ❖ Don't be alarmed by your child's tears - it is their way of expressing a normal apprehension of the unfamiliar.
- ❖ Feel free to ask questions so that *you* can get comfortable too!

Drop Off/Pick-Up Procedures

1. Children must be escorted into the classroom (except for Pre-K children and older), and received by the teacher in the classroom.
2. Children may walk out of the classroom only when accompanied by the parent or authorized person. We have a paging system we can use to call After-school children (Pre-K and older) to the lobby for pick-up.
3. Children will only be released to individuals authorized in the child's records or specially authorized by the parent. We will check the identification of individuals we are meeting for the first time.

Clothing

Comfortable and washable clothing is recommended so that your child may fully and appropriately participate in the activities. For safety reasons, hard-sole shoes (e.g. dress shoes) and cowboy boots are not allowed as they may cause serious injuries during playground activities.

Spare Clothing Policy

A **complete** change of clothing needs to be left in your child's cubby at all times so that we may keep your child comfortable in case of accident or spills. **Please label all spare clothing with the child's full name.** If they have an accident and need a completely new outfit, you will be called to come pick them up if they do not have the spare items in their cubby.

Your Child's Personal Items

All **personal items** need to be **clearly labeled with your child's full name.**

We will try our best to keep up with personal items, but please understand that we cannot be held responsible for them.

For safety reasons we have to be able to monitor the items that are in the children's environment. Therefore, **absolutely no toys may be brought into the school without prior approval from the teacher or director.** Please realize that toys and other items may be potentially fatal choking hazards or contribute to other hazardous situations. Toys may not be stored in a child's bag or cubby as children have a tendency to bring out these items during the course of the day.

Guidance and Discipline

We consider discipline a learning experience to help guide a child into making appropriate choices and to encourage self-regulation. We believe that positive reinforcement, the explanation of natural consequences, and redirection all help foster appropriate behaviors in a child.

Rules will be stated in a positive way. We encourage our teachers to be consistent in enforcing rules. The teachers will serve as an example by using quiet voices and listening to others. The consequences for misbehaving will be reasonable and age appropriate. Our teachers will use positive reinforcement and re-direction when a child misbehaves. We will not allow our teachers to yell or use any form of corporal punishment.

If the child is endangering others with his/her behavior, he/she will be removed from the situation. Discipline notices will be sent home to inform you of your child's misbehavior. Please look on your child's cubby, or on the front counter for a discipline notice. All notices must be signed by an administrator and the parent.

When a child exhibits behaviors that pose a concern, we will encourage a parent/teacher conference to share information and ideas to help the child work through the phase. If however, after various efforts to resolve a behavior situation, there is still a continued safety concern, we may need to recommend alternative child care arrangements that may better suit the needs of the child and dis-enrollment may occur.

Parent/Teacher Communication

We believe that ongoing open communication between parents and teachers is critical in helping a child transition into the program and in helping to benefit the entire family. We encourage the mutual sharing of suggestions and concerns.

In addition, daily reports will be given in our Infant and Toddler programs and a weekly progress report will be distributed in our 3 and 4 year-old classrooms. Weekly lesson plans and a schedule will also be available to fill you in on the various learning experiences that our teachers will establish.

Birthdays and Celebrations

You are welcome to bring in cupcakes, cookies, etc. for your child's birthday. Please do not bring anything with tree nuts or peanuts/peanut butter. Please make sure that the teacher is informed about the day and time you will be coming. Please refrain from sending in goody bags for each child. Also, please do not send invitations to your child's class if you are going to have the celebration at Mill Creek. You are welcome to give out invitations to your child's party that you are having outside of school.

We will be glad to put them on the children's cubbies, but our responsibility will end there. We can not give out phone numbers or addresses of other students for invitations. Thank you for your understanding. It is Mill Creek's policy that no gifts be exchanged during school for birthday celebrations.

Medicine Administration

Parents will be required to complete a Medication Authorization form before any medicine will be administered to a child.

- ❖ For the safety of our children, medicine brought to school must be stored in the medicine storage boxes in the refrigerator or the director's office. Due to the potential risks and danger, medicine must never be left on the front desk without staff knowledge, or left in the child's bag, cubby, or anywhere else in the classroom.
- ❖ All medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's full name. Prescription medication must have a current date and may only be administered to the child it was originally prescribed for.
- ❖ We will not dispense medication that may mask symptoms such as Tylenol/Motrin for a fever or Immodium A.D. for diarrhea. Children may be given Tylenol/Motrin for teething pain or for relief from discomfort due to shots.
- ❖ The dosage and manner in which the medicine is to be given must be consistent with the recommendations on the bottle.
- ❖ We do not administer prescription medicine more than once a day. For example, if your child's medicine must be administered morning, noon and evening, we ask that you administer the morning and evening doses at home.
- ❖ Breathing treatments will be administered between 11:00am - 3:30pm. The morning and evening dose must be administered at home.
- ❖ Over the Counter medicine will be given only once per day for a maximum of two days, unless a doctor's note is provided.

Our Symptom Free Policy

Your child may return to Mill Creek Academy only after being symptom free and without aid of medicines that mask symptoms (e.g. Tylenol, Immodium A.D.) for **24 hours**, or if accompanied by a doctor's note stating that the child is not contagious.

Parental Notification

Illness:

If a child has any of the following symptoms during school hours, a parent will be called to pick up the child immediately.

- ❖ Rashes (other than normal skin irritations)
- ❖ Green nasal discharge, accompanied by a fever.
- ❖ Sore throat
- ❖ Open sore
- ❖ Pink eye
- ❖ Chicken pox
- ❖ Vomiting
- ❖ Diarrhea
- ❖ A fever of 100.5 degrees and above
- ❖ Any sicknesses listed on the GA DHR website

You are responsible for notifying us directly upon your child's diagnosis of a communicable disease. We will inform all parents if there has been an exposure of a communicable disease in the school.

For the protection and well-being of our children, these guidelines will be enforced carefully and consistently. Our illness policy is in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Department of Human Resources.

Your understanding and cooperation is necessary to help keep all our children as healthy as possible.

Injury:

An incident report will be sent home for any injuries at Mill Creek Academy that require our attention. Please look for these on your child's cubby, or on the front counter. All report must be signed by an administrator before they go home with the child.

Emergency Situations

Fire:

In the event of a facility fire, all teachers and staff will return to their scheduled station and escort the children out of the facility immediately through the nearest exit (individually highlighted on posted floor plan in each room). The children will then be escorted, together, across the street to the Publix shopping center parking lot where parents will be contacted.

Severe Weather:

In the event of severe weather such as a tornado, all children and staff members will be gathered in the inner hallways of the building until all threat of danger has passed.

Physical Plant Problems:

In the event that there should be a loss of power or water in the building, as long as we can ensure the well-being and safety of the children and the teachers we will continue to stay open. If however, we should deem that the needs of the children are not being met appropriately, it may become necessary to have the children picked up immediately and close the school until the problem is resolved. In the event of other unforeseen structural damage to the center, the children will be safely escorted out of the building and across the street to the Publix shopping center parking lot where parents will be contacted. Teachers will take their roll book with them as they exit and attendance will be taken in the Publix parking lot.

Injury or Death:

In life-threatening emergency situations, 911 will be called immediately and then the parents or emergency contacts will be notified. In a non-life-threatening emergency case where transportation to a hospital is necessary, we will immediately try to notify the parents, emergency contacts, or the child's physician. If however none of the aforementioned are available, 911 will be called and the child will be transported to the nearest hospital.

Loss of Child

In the event that a child wanders away from the facility or a group on a field trip, the teacher will immediately find a qualified substitute to watch her class, notify a director, request assistance and search for the child. Parents will be notified immediately if the child is not under direct supervision for any amount of time.