



Best Friends For Kidz - Flexible Child Care Center
Drop In, Part Time, Full Time

Parent Handbook

408 E. Lumsden Rd.
Brandon, FL 33511

813-684-2636

www.bffkidz.com

State License Number: C HC 433073

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Welcome to Best Friends for Kidz, Inc.
408 E. Lumsden Rd. Brandon, FL 33511
PH: (813) 684-2636
www.bffkidz.com

New Parent/Guardian Orientation Plan Checklist

Welcome! We are excited to welcome you and your child to Best Friends for Kidz. We are a State Licensed facility that offers a Christian based preschool program. We understand the importance of finding quality child care for your children. We are grateful for putting your faith and trust in us.

It is very important that all parents/guardians are oriented to our child care program. Knowing and understanding the policies and procedures of Best Friends for Kidz will ensure the best possible care for the children. Below is your orientation checklist. We will be sharing information with you about our center. This orientation is intended to help you understand what you need to know as you leave your child in our care. We plan to cover all areas listed below with you. If an area is not covered or if you do not receive a copy of the policies and procedures, please be sure to let us know. Please feel free to ask questions, if needed, at any time.

- Information about our Center, our Staff, ratios, curriculum, Director of operations, days and hours of operations, and closings.
- Open door policy
- Non-discrimination policy
- Custody agreements
- Abuse and neglect reporting
- Behavior expectations and reasons for suspending or withdrawing children
- Discipline policy
- Health policy, communicable disease policy, infection control, and medication procedures.
- Enrollment and withdrawal policy
- Pick up and drop off policy
- Attendance and absences
- Communication with staff and family involvement
- Meals and allergies
- Transition procedures
- Screening and assessments
- Screen Time
- Outdoor Play and Shoes Policy
- Safety Policy
- Animals and Pets on property
- Rates, fees, payments, and tuition agreement
- How to reach us if you have a Complaint/Concerns

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand each of the sections listed above in the parent handbook.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

•**About our Center:**

Best Friends for Kidz is located at 408 E. Lumsden Rd. Brandon, FL 33511. Our licensing record, including compliance report forms from Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing, and evaluating forms from Health, Building, and Fire Departments that inspected the center are posted in our reception area.

•**Center’s Philosophy:**

♥ Philosophy from the Heart ♥

Best Friends for Kidz bases its program through experience, knowledge, and love for children. Best Friends for Kidz views itself as an asset to the child’s well-being and the parent/guardian’s peace of mind. The staff is carefully selected by personally viewing them in action with the children and parent/guardians. Programs are personally designed by the President of the company and viewed by the Director and Managers to ensure child development and parent/guardian’s satisfaction. We believe children need the opportunity to be the best they can be by experiencing new challenges and adventures that will teach them about daily life and prepare them for school as well. Parent/guardians are welcome to give ideas and suggestions to the creation of this learning center. We believe playing and singing are two of the most joyful ways a child can develop their motor skills. Constructive time will also be applied for the more challenging motor skill development. This would be such things as writing, sorting, cutting, and so on. Children will be allowed a variety of choices to make each day wonderful! They will be guided and given examples and rules to follow. Children will be allowed to make decisions and solutions as they approach different tasks. When a child becomes frustrated, ideas for resolving the problem will be suggested to the child and the child will have the opportunity to make their own decisions. We believe we need to be thankful for something each day. During lunchtime and group time, we will take an opportunity to share what we are thankful for. We believe children should know that we live in a large world with different children and languages. Best Friends for Kidz wants to provide a feeling of home away from home. We are striving for the best possible environment you would want to leave your child in. We do offer a Christian based preschool program and our center is licensed for full-time care. And don’t forget... we can provide you with tax receipts for your childcare expense!

• **Mission Statement:** Our mission is to provide families with high-quality childcare who focuses on the overall development of young children through Educational researched based approaches with Christian based loving values.

•**About our Staff:**

All staff members are experienced child caregivers who are certified in CPR, First Aid, and Child Abuse Recognition. In addition to the First Aid and CPR, our staff is also trained by the American Red Cross in hand washing techniques and disinfecting procedures. Most staff members have an early education background or a university degree in Early Childhood or related program. Police background checks and reference checks are conducted on all staff. We pride ourselves on providing a safe, loving and friendly atmosphere for your child to play and learn. Our staff members strive to make your children feel welcome at our center and are confident that your children will enjoy themselves so much that they will beg to come see us again!

•**Director of Operations:**

The founder of Best Friends for Kidz is Amanda Danielle Flowers. She holds a Florida Teaching License for children in Kindergarten through 6th grade and Exceptional Student Education Certification (K-12). Amanda has worked with children of all ages and backgrounds since 2005. She holds a Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education and a master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction.

My personal philosophy:

“Put the children first” We work hard to make sure all teachers are highly qualified professionals and ready to educate our youth. We make sure that each teacher builds a personal relationship with the children in their class.

“I know that each child is an individual and as educators it is the teachers’ job to unlock the talents of each child.”

•Days of Operation:

We are open from Monday to Friday from 6:30am-6:00pm. We also offer extended care hours from 6:00pm-7:00pm for an additional fee.

•Holiday Closings:

Best Friends for Kidz will be closed on New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. If the holiday is on a weekend day we may close the day before or after. Please look out for postings, emails, the newsletter and the calendar, as we may close early or entirely on other occasions.

•Weather Closings:

Please be aware that BFF Kidz may close due to impending dangerous weather. We remain open unless there is a severe warning. Please watch local news stations for details or delays. **Anytime Hillsborough County public school's close, our center will close.**

•Open Door Policy: We understand how important and special each child is to us and their parents, so we encourage our first time and recurring parents to pop in at any time. On a child's first day at our center we allow parents to stay a little longer to ensure that the parent and their child feels comfortable. Parents are welcome to visit, watch, and/or participate at Best Friends for Kidz. Our half door concept allows parents to see their children at play. Parents have unlimited access to their child while in our care. We have seasonal festivities and parties that you may want to be a part of. A monthly newsletter can be picked up on site or emailed to you to keep you informed about the services we offer, upcoming events, new staff, etc. Please info@bffkidz.com if you have any questions or concerns, or suggestions. Any issues will be dealt with promptly. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's needs with the caregivers on duty. We are here to make your child's Best Friends for Kidz experience a happy one, so let us know what we can do to help your child adjust. (Please note that if your child is in regular attendance (at least 2 times/week, during the day) a conference can be scheduled to discuss your child's development.) Staff and parents can discuss concerns with the members of the administration team or email the Director of Operations at flowers@bffkidz.com and she will reply as soon as possible.

•Non-Discrimination Policy:

Best Friends for Kidz abides by the principles of love and love for thy neighbor and follows the policy of God and love. We are a proud Christian daycare. We don't discriminate against anyone regardless of an individual's race, sex, age, religion, disability, color, national origin, military status, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression., adult, child, staff, or parent. Best friends for Kidz celebrates differences and encourages diversity. Upon walking into our center, you will see pictures of people of different ethnic backgrounds, and in each classroom pictures of families, and kids from around the world. Once a month our center celebrates unity month where a different country is learned about. Children are given the opportunity to learn about different traditions, customs, and holidays. Best Friends for Kidz is an inclusive and friendly environment. We will make all necessary accommodations for children with special needs as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. We pride ourselves in treating everyone with respect and love.

•Custody Agreements:

Any custodial parent or guardian of a child enrolled in a child care center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their child/children, or evaluation of their care or the premises. A parent of a child enrolled at the center who is not the child's residential parent shall be permitted unlimited access to the center and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent,

unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the non-residential parent. Upon entering the center, the parent or guardian shall notify the administrator or designee of their presence.

•**Abuse and Neglect Reporting:**

Best Friends for Kidz is in full compliance with chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.) which mandates that any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, neglected, or abandoned by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Abuse Hotline of the Department of Children and Families

♥ **Abuse Hotline:** Phone: 800-96-ABUSE (22873) • TDD 800-453-5145

Fax: 800-914-0004 Website: <http://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us>

•**Behavior Problems/Disenrollment Policy:**

Our priority at Best Friends for Kidz is SAFETY. If a child demonstrates behavior that endangers the safety and wellbeing of others (i.e. biting), their behavior will be documented, and it will be discussed with the parents. If the behavior persists even after attempting to work with the child, Best Friends for Kidz will notify the parents that the child is on a **3-strike policy**. Once on the 3-strike policy, if any staff member must document a child's behavior 3 or more times the child will be suspended or disenrolled. **Other reasons for disenrollment include**, but are not limited to, failure to pay for service, parent not communicating with the staff regarding their child's care, parents not being accessible when necessary (i.e. not answering cell phones), and parents not complying with Best Friends for Kidz policies and state day care rules. The disenrollment will be documented in the child's file.

•**Discipline Policy:**

The Hillsborough County Ordinance 90-38 Section 1, 6 and 92-20 Section 6.02(b) "Child Discipline" requires that parents/guardians are notified in writing of the disciplinary practices used by Child Care Facilities and Family Day Care Homes prior to admission of their child. No spanking or any other physical punishment is allowed. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest, or toileting. Children shall not be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, or frightening.

Child Care Facilities and Family Day Care Homes must ensure that disciplinary practices, which are both constructive and appropriate to the child's age, are properly administered. The objective being to help the child regain control of his or her emotions and/or actions, not to prevent him or her from expressing his or her feelings or moods. It is important that we remain realistic in the expectation of the behavior of each child, taking into consideration their developmental stage and their age. Discipline is a slow, step-by-step task of helping children to see the sense in acting a certain way.

If the child becomes a danger to the staff or other children, parents will be called immediately. Our 3 school rules are as follows:

- a) *You may not hurt yourself.*
- b) *You may not hurt your friends.*
- c) *You may not hurt anything in your environment.*

The discipline methods are restricted as follows, staff shall not:

1. Abuse or neglect children;
2. Utilize cruel, harsh, unusual, or extreme techniques;
3. Utilize any form of corporal punishment;
4. Delegate children to manage or discipline other children;
5. Use physical restraints on a child;
6. Restrain a child by any means other than holding children for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the children may regain control;
7. Place children in a locked room or confine children in any enclosed area;

8. Confine children to equipment such as cribs or high chairs;
9. Humiliate, threaten or frighten children;
10. Subject children to profane language or verbal abuse;
11. Make derogatory or sarcastic remarks about children or their families;
12. Punish children for failure to eat or sleep or for toileting accidents;
13. Withhold any food (including snacks and treats), rest or toilet use;
14. Punish an entire group of children due to the unacceptable behavior of one or a few;
15. Isolate and restrict children from all activities for an extended period.

•Health Policy:

Our policy is set up to protect the children against the spread of illnesses. To prevent the spread of illness or disease, all staff and children shall wash their hands upon arrival, before and after eating or serving food, after using the restroom or assisting a child in the restroom, before and after diaper changing, after sneezing or coughing into hand or blowing nose, after wiping a child's nose, before and after handling animals, after coming in from outside, and before and after administering first aid. Each child must have an annual physical exam or obtain a statement of health condition and an up-to-date immunization record or a Religious/Medical Exemption Form. Parents/guardians should keep the staff informed of any changes in their child's health and/or eating habits (example: a child who develops an allergy or an infant changing formula, teething, immunizations, etc.). Children who are ill should not be brought to the Center. Each child shall have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival at the Center to detect any apparent illness, communicable disease, unusual condition, or unusual behavior that may adversely affect the child or other children. Children should be able to participate in daily activities.

•Communicable Disease Policy/Infection Control:

The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease. The center implements the following preventative practices daily for the management of communicable disease:

*Best Friends for Kidz will immediately notify the parent or guardian (by phone) of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness. If your child shows any signs of the symptoms listed below, you will be called and asked to pick your child up immediately. Please help us to protect the other children by responding promptly. If the child has any of the following symptoms at home, we ask that you keep your child out of school until the symptoms are gone or until your physician says it is alright to return. **A child must remain home for 24 hours AFTER a fever has returned to normal WITHOUT FEVER REDUCER MEDICINE OF ANY KIND.***

The symptoms include:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or above (For temperatures taken under the armpit, add one degree to the registered temperature.
- Severe coughing – child gets red or blue in the face, or child makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sounds after the cough.
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pinkeye – tears, redness, or eyelid lining followed by swelling and discharge of pus
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin patches
- Persistent running nose
- Crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of skin – possibly accompanied by fever
- Unusually dark, tea colored urine – especially with a fever
- Grey or white stool

- Headache and stiff neck
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Severe itching of body or scalp, or scratching of scalp
1. The child suspected of having a communicable disease shall be isolated on a cot/mat (depending on age of the child) in the office, where they are always within sight and hearing of an adult. All linens and blankets used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. The cot/mat shall be sanitized with an appropriate germicidal agent, or if soiled with blood, feces, vomit or other body fluids, the cot/mat shall be cleaned with soap and water and then sanitized with an appropriate germicidal agent.
 2. A child shall not be readmitted to the center if they have had any of the following symptoms within the last **24 hours**:
 - a) Sore Throat
 - b) Runny Nose
 - c) Diarrhea
 - d) Nausea or vomiting
 - e) Flushed face or fever
 - f) Earache
 - g) Rash
 - h) Inflamed or matted eyes
 - i) Signs of parasitic infection (scabies, lice, etc.)
 3. Staff must not come to work if they are showing signs of a communicable disease. A substitute will be called.
 4. The “Child Day Care Center Communicable Disease Chart” shall be posted behind the front desk for reference.
 5. **Medication-** Parents must complete the appropriate form if they require medication to be given to their child. Parents should not send medication with a child unless it is given to a staff member directly. Other medicine needs (i.e. Inhalers/ nebulizer, epipens, etc.) can be discussed with administrator or staff member in charge. Such medications will be given to the administrator or designee during the child’s visit and it will be returned to the child’s parents upon departure. If a school age child requires the immediate availability of emergency medication such as an inhaler/nebulizer, the center staff must be notified by the parent upon check in that the child has the medication and the appropriate forms must have been completed. All medications **MUST** be given to a staff member for safe keeping, upon arrival, as we do not want other children to have access to the medication. All medication/prescriptions must be current and not expired and in its original container. A doctor’s note must accompany all medication to be given with specific details on dosage or how to administer.
 6. **Medical Conditions-** If your child has a serious medical condition or one that requires daily assistance; please notify the office to complete a chronic medical condition form. This form will be reviewed by the director to see if it is feasible for your child’s health plan to be met here at this school. If your health plan is approved a meeting will be held, to discuss accommodations for your child.

7. A mildly ill child is defined as one of the following:

- a) A child who is experiencing minor common cold symptoms, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified above, or
- b) A child who does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified above.

Any child who is mildly ill can be cared for within the child's group at the center and shall be observed for signs and symptoms of worsening condition. If symptoms occur, as listed above in # 2, the child will be isolated and discharged from the center. **A notice will be posted for parents on the sign in desk if we have any one child with a case of a communicable disease and/or a note will be sent home. (i.e. Chicken Pox)**

****Best Friends for Kidz takes pride in having an exceptionally clean facility. All equipment and toys are washed and cleaned daily. Food service gloves are used when handling food.***

•Enrollment:

Any child attending our center must have a Child Enrollment Form, current health records, emergency transportation information, and parent contact information no later than the child's first day of attendance. These forms must be reviewed and updated annually. Each child shall be examined by a licensed physician prior to the date of admission or within thirty days after the date of admission. Each child under the age of six (or not yet in kindergarten or above) needs to have an updated DH 680 & DH 3040 medical form, annually. The medical form shall affirm that the child has had the immunizations required by the State of Florida for admission to school or has had the immunizations required by the state department of health for infants and toddlers. The medical statement must bear an exam date within the last 12 months. The exam will also affirm that the child is in suitable condition for enrollment in a child day-care center. You must also provide us with up to date contact information such as home, cell, and work phone numbers, as well as e-mail addresses.

•Withdrawal Policy:

Full time and part time parents are required to provide the center with a **2 weeks' notice** when the child will no longer be attending on a regular basis. Parent is responsible for paying tuition for the last 2 weeks of tuition after the notice is given. **Please note that there are no refunds for the preschool program and payment is due at the beginning of the month.**

•Pick up and drop off Policy:

♥ **Arrival:** Children and families are greeted by a staff member upon entering the facility. Parents/guardians need to sign in using the electronic fingerprint system. If you are not registered on the system, please inform a member of the administration team and we will set you up. You may also be required to sign in on a sign in sheet if the computer system is down for any reason and leave details including a contact phone number for the day, an approximate time of return and any special instructions. When children are signed in, be sure to let us know if someone other than you will be picking the child/children up. You will need to add this person to your authorized pick up list in your file.

♥ **Children arriving from public school:** If your child attends public school, we will provide transportation from their school to our facility. If the child is not at the pick-up location, we will speak to a member of the school's staff to ensure that the child was absent or dismissed early before we drive away. However, to avoid any issues we ask that you please contact us if your child will not be attending.

♥ **Dismissal:** Children shall be dismissed only to parents or an authorized pickup person, unless the

Administrator or Staff Member in charge has been informed of a change in writing. The pickup person will be required to take their photo and fingerprint upon pick up if they are not in our system yet. Photo ID is required on the first visit. **Please note that Best Friends for Kidz will not release a child to an individual who appears intoxicated or impaired. If an individual who appears to be intoxicated or impaired attempts to pick up a child, we will attempt to reach one of the people who are authorized to pick up the child. If no other person can be reached, we will be forced to contact the proper authorities.**

•Attendance/Absence:

Parents please text the school phone if you know your child will not be in for the day or for a couple days. The school cellphone number is (813)694-0640. Since we serve many children we may not always have our full attention to the cell phone and a response may be delayed a couple hours when texting. If you need to call us or speak to us about an urgent matter, please always call us at (813)684-2636.

•Parent/Teacher/School Communication:

Best Friends for Kidz encourages communication between parents/guardians and staff to ensure the best care possible for the children. You can call or text the center's cell phone, (813)694-0460, anytime you need to reach us, however, if you need to call us or speak to us about an urgent matter please always call us at (813)684-2636. Since we serve many children we may not always have our full attention to the cell phone and a response may be delayed when texting. We recommend you programing both our numbers into your cell phone one as the BFF School Phone, and the other as BFF Cell Phone. In addition to communication via phone, we also have several other ways you can reach us throughout the day. Please read below for more information on contact methods;

♥ **E-mail:** Please email info@bffkidz.com if you have any questions or concerns, or suggestions.

♥ **Bloomz:** A Parent/Teacher Communication App that we utilize to communicate with the parents. Bloomz works both on your smartphone as well as on your computer. You will receive quick updates and photos of class activities, be able to access our class calendar, and more. This is all done in a private and secure manner through the app.

-New to Bloomz?

1. Download the "Bloomz" app from the AppStore/Play Store and click "Create Account". If browser, go to bloomz.com and click on "Join Bloomz"

2. In the text box, enter _____ (get your child's class code from a member of the administration team). You will then be prompted to create your account.

♥ **Monthly Newsletter and Calendar:** Every month you get a calendar and a newsletter. We call the calendar your "academic responsibility". It tells you what day it is, class parties, birthdays, events, and so much more. Make sure you look at this every day at home and at school, so you can plan for success! The newsletter will list and explain the events noted on the calendar and keep you updated regarding new staff, exiting news, and important information about the thins Buzzing at BFF!

♥ **Parent Teacher Conferences:** BFF Kidz will provide parent/teacher conferences 3 times during the year to discuss your child's progress, however, if you would like a conference any other time, please speak to a member of the administration team to schedule one.

♥ **Parent Luncheon:** On the third Thursday of every month, our school will have a parent luncheon. Parents are invited to come in and have lunch with their child, in the child's class room or outside in the picnic area.

•Family Involvement:

We are firm believers that family involvement is an essential part to a child's development, so we regularly try to connect with families. Please look at our monthly newsletters and calendars to see how you can stay involved. If you have any ideas or anything that you would like to see implemented at the center, please email info@bffkidz.com. Here are a few ways that you can stay involved throughout the year;

- ♥ Parent/Teacher conferences
- ♥ Open House
- ♥ Mail Day: twice a month you can write your child a letter to that will be read to them in class.
- ♥ Pumpkin Carving
- ♥ Thanksgiving Feast
- ♥ Holiday Party
- ♥ Valentine's Day/Love Fest
- ♥ Grandparents Day
- ♥ Doughnuts for Dad
- ♥ Muffins for Moms
- ♥ Multicultural Day Fest
- ♥ Graduation
- ♥ Field Trips (senior preschool and older)
- ♥ Birthdays: on your child's birthday a store brought snack may be supplied if you choose and you will also be invited in to read a story of your child's choice to the class.

•**Confidentiality:**

Information about children, families, and staff is shared on a "need-to-know" basis only. Need to know is defined as information necessary to complete to a specific job task. Need to know categories are as follows:

1. Staff, consultants, volunteers that are providing direct services to children and families.
2. Staff and consultants that are assuring quality of direct services to children and families.
3. Staff that have conditional access, or permission to access information about children and families.
4. Person(s) authorized by the parent to access child or family information.

All information records about students and families are kept in the office in a cabinet only accessible to administration staff. All our families and student's information are kept in strict confidence. Employees also read and sign our confidentiality agreement upon being hired.

•**Meals:**

Best Friends for Kidz participates in the USDA Food Program and serves all preschool students' breakfast, a hot lunch and a snack. Each meal is prepared in compliance with governing federal and state guidelines to assure nutritional value. A monthly menu is posted each month for inspection and comment. We are happy to provide this service. Breakfast will be served at 7:30am each morning. Food additions are discouraged, but if brought from home **food cannot contain any peanut products**, however USDA food program meal will still be provided if a physician's note is not on file.

****Best Friends for Kidz is a PEANUT FREE facility. Please do not bring any products containing nuts. Any variation in diet is permitted only in accord with the physician's written order or for religious purposes.**

•**Allergies:**

Please notify staff in writing and in verbal format of any allergies. It is also recommended that anytime there is a change in staff that you send a reminder. The school will add all allergies to the school list and post in the center. A CCFP Allergy form will be asked to be completed by your physician.

•**Ratios:**

We are committed to the safety and well-being of your child. The following are staff to child ratios as noted in the childcare licensing rules regulating Best Friends for Kidz:

1:4 children 6 weeks-11 months old

1:6 children 12-23 months old

1:11 children 2-3 years old

1:15 children 3-4 years old

1:20 children 4-5 years old who have not started school yet.

1:25 school age children under 12 years old

***Note:** Group size shall not exceed twice the maximum number of children allowed per child care staff member. Children are only combined when there are small group numbers typically in the early morning and evening, otherwise they are with their specific age group and assigned teacher. **Children will ALWAYS be supervised.**

•**Curriculum:**

Wee Learn (Christian Curriculum) is the curriculum used for ages infant – School Aged as a moral focus along with Funshine Curriculum which aligns Early Childhood Standards to the daily instruction in classrooms. In the VPK class we also utilize Starfall which emphasizes phonemic awareness and kindergarten readiness. Baby Doll Circle Time is incorporated in every classroom to teach social and emotional skills. To measure progress, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) will be used to screen each child from age infant to age four within three weeks of enrollment. Children in VPK will be screened using the Florida Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Assessment. Information will be shared with the parent/guardians after each assessment/questionnaire. Based on your child’s assessment/questionnaire, and individual needs, goals and/or referrals will be set up.

•**Afterschool Homework:**

Best Friends for Kidz provides a set time afterschool for homework to be completed. Please see front office to let us know if you would like your child to be included in the homework time. We still encourage parents to review their child’s homework with them at home. We also provide affordable one on one tutor time.

•**School Readiness:**

School Readiness Program Policies

This is an income based qualifying program. For more information, please call (813) 744-8941. BFF Kidz is pleased to participate in the Hillsborough County School Readiness Childcare Subsidy Program. Under this program, parents receive a credit in the form of a subsidy payment provided by the State of Florida. The State subsidy reduces but does not eliminate payments required by parent/guardians. In addition to the parent/guardian’s copayment fees required by The School Readiness Program, an additional fee will be assessed by BFF Kidz, so that we may receive our total tuition.

Reminder: School Readiness will only pay up to three absences without an extraordinary circumstances form. Please see paper in front of book to see how the circumstances are defined. They will pay up to 7 more days with this form. **School Readiness Parents are required to:**

1. Sign children in/out daily.
2. Complete Signature and Date at the bottom of the sign in/out log at the end of each month
3. Due to rate changes, notify Best Friends for Kidz 30 days prior to the child’s birthday.
4. Promptly pay Best friends for Kidz payments.
5. Submit a doctor’s note to Best Friends for Kidz for any absences due to your child seeing the doctor and for all absences beyond three days per month. To measure progress, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) will be used to screen each child receiving School Readiness Funds as requested. Information will be

shared with the parent/guardians after each assessment/questionnaire. Based on your child's assessment/questionnaire and individual needs, goals and School Readiness, you are required to pay the difference between what the State of Florida provides and the actual BFF Kidz rate.

•Procedure for transitioning to another group:

Since we are a close nit center, the children get to know all the children, teachers, and staff which makes transitioning easier for the children at our center. Infants and toddlers have their own areas and as they get older, they have opportunities to participate in activities with children of the next age group. All children are evaluated on a case by case basis to determine if they are ready for the next age group. Parents and staff work together to determine if the child is ready to move up. **Please note that rate changes due to moving up from one age group to the next will take effect the first week of the month after the child's birthday.**

•Screening and Assessment:

Teachers use a wide variety of assessments throughout the year to determine the progress of students. Classroom Observations, Curriculum Based Measurements, and Formal developmental questionnaires such as the ASQ may be used. Most children will receive a pre-test and a post-test, however more frequent assessments may be deemed necessary if your child is showing sign of delay and you will be notified if this is a concern. All screenings are conducted in the child's natural environment by the classroom teacher. At any time during the year, parents may request a conference with the teacher to check on child's development. Teachers at Best Friends for Kidz are not qualified to diagnose children; however, they can refer you to outside organizations to get further screenings done if recommended.

•Screen Time:

Our School limits the screen time for all children. Students younger than the age of 2 will not participate in video watching. Children over the age of 2, may participate in academic/thematic related screen time. However, this will never exceed a 2-hour movie viewing which will only occur for a special event. Any other screen viewing will be academic related with sign language, movement activities, letters, numbers, and other learning outcomes a teacher may use as an intervention for students to meet learning outcomes.

•Outdoor Play Policy:

Best Friends for Kidz will provide outdoor play each day for any child in attendance for more than 4 consecutive daylight hours, weather permitting. We will not go outside if the temperature is above 98 degrees or below 28 degrees, taking wind chill factors into account. In the event of rain, lightning, ice, hail, etc., children will remain inside and participate in large muscle play with games led by staff. Staff members will actively supervise children while outside to prevent injury. An attendance list of children is also taken out. Please be sure to send your child with appropriate clothes for the weather such as hats, mittens, boots and coats in the winter, and jackets or sweaters in the fall. Staff will assist the children in preparing to go outside. The play area is located adjacent to the rear of the building and is fenced in. First Aid supplies are readily available from inside Best Friends for Kidz. **Please complete a sunscreen medication form and provide the sunscreen so we can ensure your child is adequately blocked.** Teachers will apply sunscreen to all children who have provided permission on enrollment form.

•Socks/ Shoes:

Please send your child in closed toe shoes with socks, even in the summer months.

The infant room is a shoe free zone!

•Complaints/Concerns:

Your children are very important to us, and we look forward to having them visit. Do not hesitate to call us if you have any questions or concerns. We are here to be a service to you. Please call Best Friends for Kidz Corporate Office at 813-473-2331 or email us at flowersbfffkidz@gmail.com if you cannot reach an administrator in your center or if your concerns aren't being resolved.

•**Safety Policy:**

The safety and well-being of the children in our care is our top priority at Best Friends for Kidz. Prevention is the key to a safe environment. Staff is always alert and concerned about the children in their care. The following is our safety policy;

1. No child shall be left alone or unsupervised. Two or more staff members will always be present at the center when there are children there. Extra staff will be on call if the center exceeds ratios.
2. The front door is always locked. No one is given access into the center that does not appear to have business there. No one is allowed inside the center unless they are there to drop off, pick up, or take a potential customer tour. Repairmen should have an appointment, and their appointment needs to be verified with the owner/administrator.
3. Children must be signed in and out daily by the person picking up and dropping off.
4. Only the authorized people of the child/children may pick them up, unless specified to staff at time of drop off. If we are not sure of the identity of the person picking up a child, (example-during a shift change), that person will be asked for a picture I.D. **Once you are in our software system with a picture and fingerprint, we will no longer need their I.D.**
5. Please do not leave your car running with children in it while you drop off or pick up a child. Bring them in with you. Children need to be wearing an appropriate safety belt in the vehicle please!
6. The door leading from the play area to the front door must stay closed when not in use. Children are not allowed into the reception area between the front door and safety gate, except when checking in or out, or in the event of an emergency where children must exit the building.
7. Parents will be greeted by a staff member upon arrival and departure of the children from the premises in order to be sure of the child's presence. **Children must be checked in by their parents on our Procure computer system.**
8. If a child is scheduled to arrive at Best Friends for Kidz from another program (i.e. Comes on the bus from school), and does not arrive, the administrator or designee will attempt to determine the child's whereabouts by calling the parents and the program or school or place that they are coming from.
9. Children will be engaged in appropriate activities. We want them to have a safe, fun time.
10. Children are not allowed outside the center unless they are with the person who is authorized to pick them up.
11. Food for small children must be cut into small pieces.
12. Staff members will keep all areas of the center under observation.
13. Fire drills will be conducted once a month.
14. The fire emergency and weather alert plan are posted both at the front and rear doors of the center.
15. The back door will always remain locked and closed, except in the event of an emergency. All clients, repair people, etc. must use the front entrance.
16. **Incident Reports** are completed when an accident or injury occurs. One copy will be given to the parents, and the other placed in the Accident and Injuries binder to be kept on file. Note:
 - a) All children will have on file an emergency transportation form, which must be filled out prior to the child staying in the center. If a child needs emergency assistance at a source away from the center and the center has obtained the consent from the parent or guardian to transport the child, the child's records shall be transported with the child.

- b) The administrator or staff member accompanying the child to a source of emergency care shall remain with the child until the child's parent or guardian assumes responsibility for the child's care.
- c) Notify parent or guardian immediately in the event of any accident, injury, or illness.
- d) The medical and dental emergency plan is posted by the telephone, as well as all emergency phone numbers.

****Parents are responsible for all the cost associated with transportation, emergency room care, and hospitalization.**

17. Spray aerosols are not used by Best Friends for Kidz while children are present.

18. At least one staff member trained in CPR, First Aid, and Child Abuse Recognition will always be on duty.

19. In the event of a general emergency, such as an environmental threat, or threat of violence, the following action will be taken:

- a. **Threat of violence:** Children will be moved to the rear of the center away from any windows. The front door will remain locked (it is always locked-parents need to be "buzzed" in), and police will be called.
- b. **Fire Emergency:** Monthly fire drills are conducted and reviewed with staff to follow procedure in case of a fire. In the event of a fire, parents are notified as soon as possible of the situation. The sign-in and attendance sheets exit the building with a teacher to ensure all children have been evacuated.
- c. **Tornado/Weather/Flood:** Children are moved along the walls and away from any windows according to posted plan. They can remain in the center until it is safe for parents/guardians to come to retrieve their children. In the event of a flood, children are evacuated from the center and parents are called immediately.
- d. **Evacuation:** In the event that we are required to evacuate the building, the staff will take the children to the Westminster Church.
- e. **Power Failure:** In the event of a power failure, the administrator will contact the power company to determine if it can be restored quickly. Families will be notified if the power cannot be restored within the hour and if not the center will be closed.
- f. **Hurricane Days:** We remain open unless there is a severe warning. Please watch local news stations for details or delays. Anytime Hillsborough County public school's close, our center will close.
- g. **General Emergency:** For any of the above emergencies there is a plan posted in the classrooms and by all exits. Staff is trained in emergency situations and will have a cell phone readily available in the event that the center's lines are down. If children are evacuated from the center, they are evacuated to the Westminster Church.
- h. **Serious Incident, Injury, Death, or Illness:** defined as any situation occurring while a child is in the care of the center that requires emergency medical treatment or professional consultation or transportation, by emergency services only, for emergency treatment. Best Friends for Kidz does not provide transportation. The following action steps are taken:
 - 1. an incident/injury report shall be completed by the child care staff member in charge of the child when an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment; any bump or blow to the head; emergency transporting of the child; or any unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of the children or staff such as a child leaving the center unattended.
 - 2. The completed report will be given to the parent/guardian or person picking up the child from the center. In situations requiring emergency transportation, the incident/injury report shall be available at the center for the parent or guardian within at least twenty-four hours following the incident/injury. Copies of the

forms shall be kept on file at the center for at least one year and shall be available for review.

3. Notifications to Child care licensing: the center administrator or designee shall speak with a representative from the appropriate licensing office within 24 hours in the event of the following: death of a child at a center; serious incident, injury or illness that requires emergency transporting; and any unusual or unexpected event as defined in number 1 above. Written notification on the incident/injury form shall follow within 3 days of the occurrence to the licensing office via fax or mail.
4. If a child is transported by ambulance to the hospital a staff member will go with the child and bring the child's enrollment and health information. This staff member will stay with the child until the child's parent or guardian assumes responsibility for the child's care. The parents/guardians are notified immediately in such an event.

•Animals on Property:

BFF Kidz has a pet fish and a plant in every classroom. The teacher and children are responsible for feeding and watering them.

•Rates:

1. **Full time or part time weekly rates:** Weeks run from Monday to Friday. If you choose this rate, you pay at the beginning of the week and it does not carry over to the next week and is not refunded if your child is ill. Meals and snacks are included.

2. **Daily Rates:** If you need just one day of care, we offer flat rates for up to 9 hours at the center. (hourly rates apply after the 9 hours)

One child	\$55/day
Two children	\$80/day
Three children	\$95/day
Additional child	\$10/day
Under 24 months	+\$15/day

3. **Hourly Rates:** If you need care for just a few hours, we offer flat rates.

Under 24 months	\$10/hour
Over 24 months	\$8.50/hour

****Parents must choose a full time or part time program when enrolling their children to guarantee their spot daily. Please note that rate changes due to moving up from one age group to the next will take effect the first week of the month after the child's birthday.**

Important Note: Children are not able to change between programs week to week. Once a child has signed up for a program they must remain in that program for a minimum of 1 month. This switching from full time to part time. You cannot downgrade to a part time package for one week as we are not able to enroll another part time child for just one week. If your schedule will be changing for one week then you will have to choose either an hourly or a daily rate. If you would like some assistance choosing a program that is right for your family, please see an office manager.

•Fees:

1. **Vacation Fee:** If your child will be on vacation a \$40/week/child fee is required to hold their spot.
2. **Sibling Discount:** When enrolling in weekly packages a \$10 discount will be given on the oldest child's rate. Youngest sibling rate applies first (tuition includes meal, snacks, and drinks daily)

3. **Annual Fees:** These are due every June for all children enrolled in a weekly program and are as follows;
Activity Fee: \$75/year per child
Registration Fee: \$15/year per child
Please note that the annual fees are capped at \$150/family
4. **Late Pick-Up Policy:** Preschool Hours are from Mon-Fri 6:30am-6:00pm and there will be a \$5.00 Late Fee charged, plus \$1.00/minute if the child is picked up after closing hours. Please know that many of us are excited to get home to our families, to church, or after-hours errands. Picking up late delays the chores we must do in order to provide a safe and healthy environment for the children arriving at 6:30 a.m. This courtesy means a lot to each of us and phone calls are required if you will ever be late. BFF Kidz does offer afterhours care for additional fee, please see the office if this is something you may need.

****Note: Additional charges may apply for participation in field trips and activities taking place at Best Friends for Kidz.**

•Payments:

Weekly tuition rates are discounted on the basis that your child will regularly attend school and pays tuition weekly. The agreed weekly tuition rate should be paid on Monday prior to the week of service. Tuition Express forms to have tuition automatically deducted on Mondays or Friday are recommended to avoid late fees or penalties.

•Late Payments:

Payments are considered late if paid after noon on Monday. This indicates your child already attended one day of school without being paid for and a late fee will be assessed. Late payment fee is \$10 for the first day and \$5/day for each day after.

•Tuition Agreement:

This agreement is a binding contract of payment for childcare services provided by Best Friends for Kidz. I understand that payments are due prior to service and any late payments will incur additional charges. I understand that a tuition express form is to be kept on file with a current valid account or card in order to receive services. I understand any changes or discounts in my tuition will be processed after I have completed a new tuition payment form. I understand that my tuition rate changes one month after successful transition to the next age group. I understand that I am expected to pay the cost of \$40 to hold a slot in the instance my child is absent for the length of a week. This does not apply for partial absences; I am still responsible for the agreed upon weekly tuition even if my child attends only part of the week. I understand that I am responsible for any up charges applied for going over my hours or picking up outside designated times. I understand I am to give two weeks written notice before withdrawing my child. If I leave without notice I am responsible for the last two weeks tuition. Below is a detailed description of my individualized quote:

*The Lord causes my thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and so my plans are established and succeed.
-Proverbs 16:3*

If at anytime you would like to hire an employee from Best Friends for Kidz for Personal Babysitting, please sign this agreement with he employee and turn it in to the main office.

We, _____ and _____, the parents and/or legal guardians of _____ (hereinafter collectively referred to as “the Family”) and _____, (hereinafter referred to as the “Teacher”) understand, acknowledge, and agree as follows:

1. Best Friends for Kidz does not support or sanction the practice of families engaging the services of any of Best Friends for Kidz employees for babysitting.
2. In the event that the Teacher is engaged by the Family to babysit, Best Friends for Kidz does not, in any way, warranty or guaranty the suitability of the Teacher for this purpose. Best Friends for Kidz shall not be responsible, in any way, for such arrangement nor shall Best Friends for Kidz be responsible, in any way, for any disputes of any kind and nature, which may arise between you, including any claims, injury, or damage to the Family, their minor child/children, the Teacher or either’s property.
3. While engaged by the Family as a babysitter, the Teacher shall be considered an employee of the Family and not an employee of Best Friends for Kidz. Any activities or events that occur during such babysitting services, including but not limited to any transportation to and from the Center, are outside Teacher’s responsibilities and duties as an employee of Best Friends for Kidz. By signing below, the Family, on behalf of themselves and their minor child/children, and the Teacher hereby agree to release, hold harmless, and indemnify Best Friends for Kidz, Inc., and their subsidiaries, affiliates and employees for any claims, injury, or damage of any kind and nature arising therefrom.

Parent Signature	Date
Parent Signature	Date
Staff Signature	Date