

104 Steele Street

Phil Campbell, AL 35581

Policy Handbook

Welcome to Bobcat Babies. Since this will be your child’s home away from home, we try to provide a safe, caring, homelike atmosphere for your children while at the same time providing for their physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Please read the policies carefully.

**Nondiscrimination:**

We will not discriminate in relate to admissions of any child on the bases of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability. We share our flyers with families in many local businesses, post them on facebook, at the Franklin County DHR, and Franklin County health department. By doing this, we encourage a diverse enrollment. We provide a diverse curriculum that engages children and families as well as teaching multicultural learning activities. Indoor and outdoor learning/play environments have an array of toys, materials, posters, etc. that reflect diverse cultures and ethnicities. Inclusion in our program includes holding high expectations and intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities, facilitated by individualized accommodations, and using evidence-based services and supports to foster their development, friendships with peers, and sense of belonging.

Plan of Action:

1. Work with families to develop a plan of action
2. Provide trainings for staff
3. Provide resources within the classroom to support each child
4. Documenting and sharing developmental progress with families and other service providers
5. Coordinating with community-based service providers, including local disability support agencies, such as the school system if older than three
6. Integrating IEP goals into children’s learning across everyday routines
7. Facilitating social learning opportunities between children with disabilities and their peers

**Our Philosophy:**

It is the philosophy of Bobcat Babies that children be encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences where all children can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment. We believe that each child is a unique individual and that all children can learn. Our preschool programs provide inclusive settings that recognize children's varied abilities, interests, needs, and learning styles.

We believe children learn best through meaningful play. Our play-based, child centered program reflects the integration of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, self-help and aesthetic areas for the total development of the child. Meaningful play encourages curiosity, discovery and problem solving which allows individual growth and development of a positive self-image.

**Parent Communication/Interaction:**

We, at Bobcat Babies, believe in open communication between parents and faculty. We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when parents are involved in their educational program. The primary bridge between home and school is the involvement of family and community.

We use an app called Procare to connect with parents. Through the app you will get messages and pictures from your child’s teacher, newsletters letting you know things that are going on in the classroom, as well as invoices for payments. We also have a Bobcat Babies Parent group on facebook that we encourage everyone to join. Here we post pictures of your child’s class and activities they do throughout the day. We also post trainings/learning opportunities for you to learn more about how to help your child grow and little activities for your family to do at home. We would love for you to share pictures of these activities on the page as well! We have parent boards in the entryway where each class posts reminders, classroom updates, and lesson plans.

**Our goals:**

In this program the abilities rather than the disabilities of each child are emphasized, with particular focus on the "Three C's" basic for everyone:

o Caring for self

o Coping with his/her world

o Communicating with others

The goal of the staff is to build an adequate foundation for the child's school years. The program we pursue is geared toward helping children develop habits of observation, questioning and listening. We want to ease the transition from home to school - helping them to learn how to get along with other children and adults, to develop skills through active games and spurring emotional growth through group activities. We want you, as a parent, to look into our busy, happy, noisy, creative classrooms and see your child at work and play. We want you to realize the validity of that play and the importance of what is being learned. Parents and teachers together can help the children to develop their full potential.

**Our Curriculum:**

Our staff makes their own curriculum in order to adapt it to the class they have at that time. We know that the children learn at different stages and make sure to keep that in mind while planning activities each week. We choose a theme for the week, and our teachers go to work planning for the children in their class.

In order to better accommodate the needs of each child, we do ask that parents fill out a form for each child called the ASQ each August. This form helps us see where your child is and where they should be. We also use this questionnaire in order to help you be able to seek services if needed. We can provide information about services through agencies such as United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) speech or occupational therapy through EasterSeals and after age three, our local school district. I do have a list of other resources that can help as well and will be happy to share those with you if needed. These agencies are there to help and in many cases cost little to nothing.

We use Teaching Strategies Gold as an assessment tool. The checklist is used in August/when the children begin or move classes. Gold is documented daily in each classroom. This tool helps us plan activities around what each child needs as well as keep up with their progress. The Gold assessment tool connects each activity with a guideline set by the state.

We have two parent-teacher conferences each year, usually in April and October. During this conference your child’s teacher will discuss where your child stands and how they are expected to get where they need to be.

**Special Accommodations:**

We make it our mission to make sure every child gets the best out of their experience at Bobcat Babies. All children learn best in a developmentally appropriate program that offers them the support they need to participate successfully alongside their classmates. Many children with disabilities benefit from simple accommodations and modifications, while other children may need more specialized, individualized support provided by special education professionals. We work alongside these professionals, the children, and their families to help the children learn and thrive to the best of their ability.

**Center Rules:**

The children will be taught by example in our center, to have respect for themselves and each other. They will also be taught to respect our center, property, and possessions.

Any negative behavior will not be allowed. This includes but is not limited to hitting, punching, kicking, biting, standing or jumping on furniture, throwing items, bad language, etc.

**Discipline:**

Conscious Discipline is an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach. It is recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration’s (SAMHSA’s) National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP), and received high ratings in 8 of 10 categories in a Harvard analysis of the nation’s top 25 social-emotional learning programs. The Harvard study’s authors say, “Conscious Discipline provides an array of behavior management strategies and classroom structures that teachers can use to turn everyday situations into learning opportunities.” Teachers systematically create a family climate through routines, rituals, safety and classroom centers that support social-emotional learning and add meaning to academic content. We strive to use conscious discipline to help the children to better understand better choices than acting out/misbehaving. This approach helps the children learn to breathe and use their words. Some of the strategies used in our classrooms when a transition is needed might include deep breathing, redirecting, modeling behavior so that the children know what is expected, explaining what the child(ren) should be doing instead of focusing on the wrongdoing, focusing on the victim when an incident happens instead of the child that was being bossy or unkind, and encouraging communication among the children as well as with our staff.

Our Action Plan for Discipline includes:

* With the first incident, the teacher(s) will use one of the transitions listed above, and parent(s) will be notified.
* With the second incident, the teacher(s) will use one of the transitions listed above, and a parent will be called and asked to talk to the child.
* With the third incident, the teacher(s) will use one of the transitions listed above, and a parent will be called to come get the child.
* If a fourth incident occurs, the child will be suspended for three days.
* If a fifth incident occurs, the child will not be able to return.

**Transition to School Plan:**

We have come together with PCES, our feeder school, to have the children meet the kindergarten teachers once school lets out at the end of May for the children to be more comfortable with the teachers.

**Drop off/Pick up:**

Please arrive on time. If you will be late for drop-off/pick-up, your child’s teacher know as soon as possible so that we will know how many to account for when preparing lunch.

All children over the age of 12 months are expected to arrive fully dressed and ready for the day. Please do not bring your child in pajamas.

At drop-off time, make sure that you say goodbye to your child(ren) and let them know when you will be returning. Although this may produce tears, rest assured by the time you are out of the driveway, the tears have stopped. This also helps to make your child feel secure in the fact that while you may leave them when you have to, you are always coming back.

At the moment you walk in to pick up, you are in charge of your child(ren). Sometimes children will “test” to see who is really in charge. A child who has been well behaved all day will suddenly bounce all over the room when a parent arrives. The respect you show us, our facility, and our possessions will speak volumes to your child.

**Fees:**

All payments are due in advance. Payment is due in full each Friday in advance for the following week. We require a deposit (equal to the last week of care) as well as the first week’s tuition and an enrollment fee of $40 by the first day of care. If these fees are not paid, your child cannot stay and will not have a spot until it is paid. Payments that are not paid by Friday will have a late fee of $25 as of Monday and an extra $5 every day after that. Should you have a two week/monthly pay period, it is your option to pay in advance for the two/four weeks or pay weekly. Fees are as follows:

· Daily is $35/day.

· Weekly is $130/week for the toddlers, tweens, and school-age classes. For the nursery, crawlers, and wobblers classes, it is $135/week.

· Before school care only is $25/week.

· After school care only is $35/week.

· For both before and after school care, it is $50/week.

Notify your child’s teacher as soon as possible if you will be arriving late. After 5:00 p.m. late charges will be added at the rate of $2.00 for every minute. At 5:01 p.m. you are late and will be charged! Fees for being late must be paid at pick up that day.

We do accept checks, cash, or payment through the procare app. Should I receive an NSF returned, you will be charged a fee of $35.00 to cover any costs the bank imposes on us. A second NSF will result in all payments being made in cash. Fees are expected to be paid whether your child attends day care or not. This is also the case if your child is on CMA. If your child is not here, CMA does not pay. You will be required to pay. If your child is full-time, you must at least meet your minimum of twenty-five hours each week.

We require a two-week written notice if you are terminating child care. If none is given, one week of additional payment must be made, whether or not your child is present.

**Vacation/Holidays:**

We are closed on the following holidays, and you will be required to pay for them, providing the holiday falls on a regular day of care (according to your contract).

* New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, the week of the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, as well as the week of Christmas.
* We will also be closed two days of Spring Break with the school system and have an in-service day in the fall. Both will be announced ahead of time to give you ample time to plan.

One week of vacation time will be given per calendar year to full time clients. Half of your regular payment is due for these days off upon at least a two-week notice. There will be no "roll-overs" to the following year. Extra vacation time in the same year will require full payment.

**Safety:**

Your child’s safety is paramount. All electrical outlets have child proof safety covers. We also have smoke detectors with batteries changed regularly and a fire extinguisher where required. There is also a list of emergency numbers, flashlights, and a first aid kit in all emergency bags for each classroom. Tornado and fire drills are practiced monthly and documented.

I, as well as each of my employees, have taken infant/child CPR and first aid.

**Clothing:**

Do not send your child to daycare in “dress clothes”. Dress them in play clothes only. Although we try our best to keep the children clean, even in the best of circumstances… accidents do happen. They are children after all!

Make sure your child always has a complete change of clothing here with their name on them, including underwear and socks. Please provide a different change of clothes should the one here be used or if the season changes.

During the winter months, make sure your child has the appropriate clothing. We go outside every day, unless it is raining, too wet from rain earlier, below 40 degrees, or above 95 degrees.

**Mandated Reporting:**

As a licensed childcare provider, we are mandated reporters. All providers must report suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect of a child to the agency or police as required by the state of Alabama. This is simply listed to make you aware. In the event you have concerns about the care your child or any other child in our care is receiving, you may contact DHR in Franklin County. The number to reach them is 256-331-5900.

**Quiet Time:**

Every day between 11:00 and 2:00 we have quiet/nap time. All younger children will lay down to rest. Older children will be given quiet time activities. We ask that you keep visits and phone calls during this time to a minimum. We also ask that you do not pick children up during this time unless it is an emergency as to not disturb the rest of the class.

**Meals and Services:**

All food served during the day will include servings from each basic food group as specified by the USDA. Breakfast is served between 7:00 and 8:15. If you will be arriving later than your child’s regular breakfast time, which will be included in their class schedule, please see that your child(ren) have eaten breakfast prior to arriving.

Lunch will be served between 10:30 and 12:00, and they will have a snack after quiet/nap time.

* If any food or bottles are brought from home, they must be clearly labeled with the child’s name.
* It is important to let us know if your child has any known allergies.
* If your child is still on formula, it is required by DHR that the formula be pre-mixed and refrigerated. We warm them in the crockpot before they are given the bottle.

**Transportation:**

We are not allowed to transport children.

**Sick Policy:**

I will notify you immediately should your child develop any of the following symptoms:

* Underarm temperature of 99 degrees Fahrenheit or over, or oral temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or over.
* Vomiting or diarrhea
* Any rash other than mild diaper or heat-related rash.
* Head lice

Should your child develop any of these symptoms, you will be expected to pick up your child within one hour. If this is not possible, you will need to have another person listed on your emergency information form that can. You will also be called at our discretion should your child clearly appear to be uncomfortable, regardless of whether other symptoms have appeared.

We do not accept a child with any of the above symptoms. Symptoms must be gone for 24 hours without medicine prior to re-admittance. If a child has gone home with lice, a teacher will check the child’s head upon arrival. Should we find anything, your child will not be allowed to stay. **If your child is sent home for a COVID test, it must be a test from the doctor, and we must have a note stating the child had a negative test, or if it is positive when the child can return.**

**Immunizations:**

All children in our center must have the appropriate immunizations for their age. We do not accept children without the appropriate immunizations for the protection of the children and our staff.

**Reportable diseases:**

I will notify you of any confirmed case the same day I am notified by the parent/guardian. Your child’s name or any other child’s name will not be disclosed. If you have any questions regarding an illness contagious period, symptoms, or policy, please ask.

Common Contagious Disease: These are not reportable to the state, but I will need to be aware if a positive case arises. Once again, you will be notified the same day I am, and no child’s name will be disclosed.

**Medications:**

Prior to administering prescription medication, we must have written permission and instructions for each medication. Medicine with the child’s name and current prescription information on the label constitutes instructions.

**Sleeping:**

Each child will be provided with a cot to sleep on. Infants will sleep in cribs with waterproof mattresses. We will sleep infants on their backs according to the recommended guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and SIDS.

**Supervision:**

We are required to be within sight and hearing of an infant, toddler, or preschooler at all times so that we are capable of intervening if needed. With school-age children, we are required to be available for assistance and care.

**Screen time:**

We do not participate in screen time. While we do music on youtube, the device is removed from the children’s sight. We do this to encourage the children in more active play rather than play on devices.

**Smoking:**

Smoking is not allowed on the daycare property.