



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



**2019-2020
SCHOOL YEAR**

Parent Handbook

2019-2020 School Year

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Children's Academy Office 704 716 4608

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Children's Academy Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday 9:00am-1:00pm

MORRISON FAMILY YMCA at Ballantyne
9405 Bryant Farms Rd, Charlotte NC 28277

www.ymcacharlotte.org

YMCA Mission:

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

YMCA Vision:

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte will connect and engage people to enhance lives and build community.

Program Philosophy:

At the foundation of the YMCA Children's Academy is the belief that children learn best through play. Our program integrates purposeful and intentionally planned activities that are designed to be fun while teaching children valuable skills. Small group work ensures that teachers can meet each child at their own developmental level and help guide them toward success. Our goal is to create an environment that will help our children learn the requisite skills while at the same time fostering a lifelong love of learning that will guide them through their later school experiences.

At the Children's Academy we strive to build strong character. Each month we focus on one of the YMCA's five character traits: caring, respect, responsibility, honesty, and faith. These values are incorporated into our learning with activities that are age appropriate and help our little ones understand these important foundations for life.

Children's Academy Staff:

Teachers- Our program is staffed with well qualified, educated, trained teachers eager to work with your child. After a thorough interview process, chosen teachers must complete a minimum of 20 hours of training throughout the year in areas such as child development, dealing with discipline, positive reinforcement, appropriate lesson planning, best practices, safety and emergency procedures, infant/child first aid and CPR, and YMCA child protection procedures. We look for leaders who exemplify outstanding character, compassion, and love of children. We take pride in the high expectations & qualifications we set for our teachers and evaluate them on a regular basis. Your child's classroom will include a team of teachers all dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing and fun learning environment.

Children's Academy Director- Marie Duty, our program Director, is responsible for the oversight of the Children's Academy as well as the training and supervision of all team members. Marie holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration and has almost 20 years of experience working with the early childhood population, including many years working in the classroom as a preschool teacher. She started as a teacher at the Children's Academy in 2005 and then served as the Assistant Director before assuming the Director role in early 2012. She also oversees 0-5 programs at the Morrison YMCA, including drop in child care, staff child care, and preschool camps.

Children's Academy Program Coordinator – Agnes Woodcook, our Program Coordinator, is responsible for the daily operations of the Children's Academy and serves as a resource for parents and staff. She is especially attuned to meeting the developmental needs of all children and seeing the unique gifts that each child brings to us. Agnes has a bachelor's degree in English and nine years of experience working with preschool-age children. She taught our TK class for several years and continues to serve as an educator by teaching our Science specials. Agnes has been with the Children's Academy since 2010 and is excited for this opportunity to enhance a program that is near and dear to her heart.

Children’s Academy Curriculum Coordinator: Seema Krakker brings her extraordinary talents as Curriculum Coordinator this year. She has a BS in Communications and completed her Early Childhood Education Administration License in 2014. For the past eleven years, Seema has held a variety of roles in the ECE setting: Administrative Assistant, Afterschool Programmer, Preschool Teacher, Program Coordinator, Curriculum Support, and as a Children's Librarian, creating curriculum and programming for preschoolers with the PLCMC Library system. Seema will continue sharing her creativity and love of teaching to all of our students by building a literacy rich, one of a kind curriculum, that is play based, enriching and engaging for the children. Her creative approach to learning inspires children and teachers alike to have fun while learning essential skills for school readiness.

Program Classes:



Children will not be "aged up" into a different classroom. They MUST meet the specified birthdate criteria for the class.

Please note that children do not change classes after they have a birthday. We recognize that classes will have a range of birthdays represented (just as children will have throughout their school career) and design our curriculum accordingly. The activities are done in a small group setting, so we can meet each child’s developmental needs, but the curriculum is created so that the activities grow with them as they develop over the course of the year.

The Explorers	18 months	Monday and Wednesday OR Tuesday and Thursday
The Navigators	2 year olds	Monday and Wednesday OR Tuesday and Thursday OPTIONAL Friday ** **(must be enrolled in either Navigators M/W or T/TH)
The Adventurers	3 year olds	Monday, Wednesday and Friday Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, OR Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
The Trailblazers	4 year olds	Monday, Wednesday and Friday OR Tuesday, Thursday and Friday OR Monday through Thursday
Transitional Kindergarten	4-5 year olds *must be 5 by Dec 1, 2019	Monday - Friday

Program Curriculum:

The Explorers (18-24 months)
(Teacher to Child Ratio 1:4, Class Size 12 children)

The Academy's program for our toddlers (18-24 months), **The Explorers**, reflects the stage of discovery and curiosity. Thus, our program focuses on exploratory play. It encourages toddlers to solve problems, develop language, and practice self help skills. The Explorer curriculum incorporates theme related activities that promote language and communication skills, large and small motor development, emerging social skills, and cognitive development through sensory activities.

Developmental milestones:

- Imitates familiar things
- Begins make believe play
- Follows simple one step directions
- Explores objects more frequently with hands
- Imitates scribbling
- Pushes and pulls objects
- Asks for things with words (rather than pointing)
- Enjoys listening to nursery rhymes and joins in repeating them

Explorers Curriculum

- Manipulative toys to practice hand eye coordination
- Matching and sorting materials
- Music and games
- Sensory exploration with sand, water, shaving cream, rice, finger paints, etc.
- Circle time with puppets and familiar songs
- Interactive story times
- Introduction of basic shapes, colors, letters, and numbers

Some of the specific activities that take place in this classroom to foster the skills mentioned above include finger plays and songs to go with our themes and allow for lots of movement and gross motor time. Finger painting, stamping (i.e., "Dots on a D"), and interactive games/activities that get the children to use their five senses to learn about various colors, numbers, shapes, and letters are all incorporated in the Explorers curriculum.

The Navigators (2's)

(Teacher to Child Ratio 1:5, Class Size 15 children)

The Academy's program for our two year olds, **The Navigators**, provides children with a fun, loving and imaginative environment. Two year olds are terrific learners and our curriculum incorporates an established routine that encourages creativity and discovery through a wide variety of theme related projects and games.

Developmental Milestones

- Begins to take turns with others
- Sorts objects by color
- Can turn pages in a book one at a time
- Jumps in place
- Constructs 4-6 word sentences
- Joins in nursery rhymes and songs
- Answers simple questions

Navigator's Curriculum

- Activities that encourage children's imagination
- Group circle time activities that foster listening, language and social development
- Music and dramatic play that encourage creativity and builds self esteem
- Art activities that encourage experimentation
- Science experiments
- Introduction to letters, numbers, colors, shapes

Children will do a wide variety of hands on activities to develop skills in the Navigators class. For example, to learn about the letter S they may play with "snow" (shaving cream); or to learn about the color purple they will have the chance to paint with grape jelly. Games that involve practicing beginning sounds; "M" for mom, "D" for dad, etc. allows them to learn and relate the letters & sounds to familiar objects in their world.

The Adventurers (3's)

(Teacher to Child Ratio 1:8, Class size 15 children)

The Academy's program for our three year olds, **The Adventurers**, continues to build on an established schedule that incorporates fun and discovery in each theme related activity. Children at this stage start to engage with more conceptual skills. They begin to be more capable of working cooperatively in groups to solve problems and play games.

Developmental Milestones

- Can use words to express feelings
- Begins to show cooperation with adults
- Speaks in longer sentences
- Draws a person with chief body parts
- Can complete a simple picture puzzle
- Walks smoothly forward, backward, and sideways
- Recognizes own name
- Knows full name

The Adventurer's Curriculum

- Enhance small and large motor skills through table time manipulatives
- Deeper exploration of letters and numbers to promote language development, and sound/letter recognition
- Play experiences that encourage independence and cooperation
- Creative art projects to facilitate expression
- Interactive story activities that promote language, cognitive, and comprehension skills
- Beginning math activities that promote problem solving

The Adventurers students begin to focus on important skill development in daily activities designed to help foster an understanding of letters/shapes/numbers and colors. Activities allow the children to learn important skills while having fun are presented. For example, to practice the letter 'S,' the children may go on a Scavenger Hunt around the building and hunt for things that start with that letter (stairs,

squares, signs, etc.). Differentiation of what sounds a letter makes is also practiced through picture: letter matching (i.e., matching a picture of a volcano to the letter V). Early math & science skills begin in our Adventures class through basic patterning, classifying, counting, predicting, and experimenting.

The Trailblazers (4s)

(Teacher to Child Ratio 1:8, Class size 15 children)

The Academy's program for four year olds, **The Trailblazers**, promotes innovative learning opportunities and individual creativity through intentional, play based activities. These activities are all designed to help each child reach their developmental goals through experiences in language, math, science, music and art.

Developmental Milestones

- Cooperates in classroom activities
- Follows simple directions
- Contributes to discussions
- Participates in large and small groups
- Uses scissors with moderate control
- Can copy shapes
- Tells some words that rhyme
- Can retell a story in sequence
- Can print first name
- Verbally counts forward to ten
- Displays 1:1 correspondence
- Can identify some numbers 1-10
- Can differentiate between written numbers and letters
- Can identify some upper and lower case letters

The Trailblazer's Curriculum

- Manipulatives to teach basic math concepts (shapes, numbers, sorting, patterns) and problem solving
- Continued letter recognition and beginning sound development, emergent writing skills (letters and numbers)
- Art activities that strengthen creativity, expression, and exploration of a variety of materials
- Experiments to introduce basic science concepts
- Songs, rhymes, finger plays, and dramatic story recreations
- Cutting & other fine motor activities
- Learning the value of numbers & their meaning in everyday life
- Introduction of high frequency words (sight words)

The Trailblazers are so excited to learn! Their carefully designed lesson plans and curriculum activities are geared toward fun with a purpose. Each of the activities is created and carried out to foster specific skills and to help them prepare for Kindergarten. Frequent dramatic recreations, where a story is read and then the children get the chance to re-tell it using magnetic or felt-board pieces that correspond with the story, gives them great practice at recall, comprehension, and sequencing.

More involved counting and patterning also happens at this age. Students are encouraged to count just about everything. They also have opportunities to match counted items with the written number. For

example, they may have to count out and put seven candy corns on the cut-out candy shape with the written number seven on it.

Science projects in this class involve predicting, observing and graphing results. Shapes are practiced each week and might be explored by cutting out several squares of varying sizes and putting them in order from smallest to largest, which also provides an opportunity for continued math practice. You will notice that many of our activities foster multiple skills.

Transitional Kindergarten (4/5s)
(Teacher to Child Ratio 1:8, Class size 16 children)

Transitional Kindergarten is designed for our older 4's and 5 year olds – they must turn 5 by December 1, 2017. TK incorporates a more in-depth curriculum designed to help this group of eager learners prepare for success in school. Still play-based, this program extends learning opportunities and begins to incorporate more early reading and writing skills, while still offering the fun of traditional preschool activities.

Developmental milestones:

- Can understand and play simple board games
- Verbalizes their feelings in any situation
- Engage peers in conversation
- Asks and responds to "why" questions
- Proper pencil grip
- Uses scissors with proficiency
- Walks on a balance beam
- Writes all letters in their name with proper capitalization
- Uses correct plurals, pronouns, and tenses
- Recognizes at least 15 phonic sounds

Transitional Kindergarten Curriculum

- Manipulatives to teach basic math concepts including sorting, patterns, and basic addition
- Continued letter recognition and sound development
- Early introduction of high frequency words (sight words)
- Beginning writing skills (letters and numbers) practiced through labeling
- Activities closely tied to books to foster the connection between the written word and daily life
- Experiments to introduce basic science concepts including predicting and graphing
- Cutting & other fine motor activities

The T-K program provides a cooperative, print-rich environment allowing students to gain an increased understanding of alphabet recognition and their sounds as well as an appreciation for the written word. Pre-writing skills will be encouraged in a developmentally appropriate way to aid in the success of each child. Increased knowledge of number sense, value and number recognition will be gained as students observe, interact, explore and problem solve. The T-K curriculum focuses on learning through listening, reading stories and poems, rhyming, dictating stories, phonetic games, drawing, journaling and inventive spelling.

The print rich environment in TK allows to utilize their understanding of individual letter sounds to create

words. Through journaling and modeling, the children will develop pre-writing skills. Using inventive spelling, they will begin writing words, then moving on to simple sentences and are encouraged to label parts of their artwork. They will also work on rhyming words and word families. For example, matching pictures into families such as cat/hat/bat.

Increased knowledge of number sense, value and number word recognition is taught as students observe, interact, explore and problem solve. Cooperative games, math manipulatives, cooking projects, experiments and stories will be utilized to teach shapes, sorting, classifying, counting, measurement, and time.

Children's Academy Enrichment Opportunities

Specialty Classes

Included in our curriculum for all of our age groups is a weekly Physical Education and Music class. Our specialty classes are taught by highly educated and well qualified teachers. Physical Education allows children the opportunity to participate in theme related games and fitness activities that promote active play and development of gross motor skills. Music class introduces the children to basic musical concepts and allows for creative expression through sounds and movement. The use of instruments, puppets, songs, and a diverse selection of music allows the children to have fun all while improving listening and communication skills.

A Science special will be held every other week for our Adventurers, Trailblazers and TK and on a monthly basis for our youngest students. Through hands on experiments and investigations children will have a unique opportunity to discover and interact. All five senses will be engaged as children learn about a wide variety of topics including space, weather, and animals.

In keeping with our commitment to the Christian principles, Character Education class will be offered on a bi-weekly basis. Through the use of bible stories, real life examples, and special activities, our teachers will help our little ones understand and apply our five character traits of caring, respect, responsibility, honesty, and faith.

Additional Enrichment Activities

At times throughout the year we will also bring in special guests such as musicians, science experts, community helpers, etc. to help our little ones learn in new ways.

YMCA Quality Standards place limits on the amount of screen time (TV, computers, etc.) for preschoolers in our care to less than 30 minutes per day. Please note, the Children's Academy does NOT regularly employ the use of television, movies, or computers as our days are filled with active learning! However, on rare occasion a short piece of educational video may be used to supplement a lesson (i.e., an example of music or animals) or as part of a special class party (i.e., on a pajama party day a class may watch a holiday program while drinking hot cocoa).

Communication/Involvement:

At the Children's Academy we want our parents to be involved and informed. Communication between parents and teachers is strongly encouraged and happens through a variety of methods:

- **Daily folders**- each day your child will take home a folder. This folder will be used to transport information about upcoming events, monthly calendars, crafts, classroom materials, and other reminders from the classroom. **Please check and empty your child's folder after school each day to ensure that you don't miss any important news.**
- **Daily sheets for Explorers and Navigators** - at the end of each day your child's folder will include an informational sheet discussing some of the activities that took place throughout the day. These sheets will include an indication of your child's overall mood, how they ate, potty information, and a personal note about your child and some of the activities that they found to be particularly fun during their time with us.
- **Director Newsletter** - Newsletters will be available on Preschool Central from the Program Director.
- **Text Alert** - We will share information that is time sensitive using our Remind.com text alert system. You must sign up to receive updates. Information texted may include time sensitive reminders, inclement weather updates or emergency information. This is a reminder system ONLY for Children's Academy participants and you will not receive other texts from the YMCA by participating.
- **Parent Volunteers** - there are so many ways to be involved in the Children's Academy. If you have time to share and would like to serve as a helper in the classrooms (as a party volunteer, class parent, etc.) we will need you to complete the YMCA Volunteer Training process. This is a brief session that helps ensure the safety of all of our children. Please contact curtis.cecil@ymcacharlotte.org to schedule a volunteer training session. You can still help if your time is limited - we always have a need to send home materials to prep for our classrooms and curriculum activities. Be on the look-out for sign up sheets at orientation and on Meet the Teacher Days.
 - **Volunteer Work Sessions** - we have a regularly occurring volunteer work session. You can sign up for a one to two hour clock of time when you have it available to help prepare curriculum activities or classroom materials. Sign-ups will be made available through a sign-up genius account, which will be shared once the school year begins.

Program Guidelines:

Operating Hours: Monday-Friday from 9:00am-1:00pm. Please see the yearly calendar for dates the Children's Academy will be closed.

Staggered Entry for Explorers: Students enrolled in the Explorers class (18-24mos) will use an alphabetical staggered entry system for the first week of school. Our staggered entry allows for your little one to adjust & explore their new classroom environment in a smaller setting. It helps for each of our staff to spend some time getting to know you and your child as we know this is a brand new experience for you both.

Arrival and Departure:

Drop off and pick up: Our program begins at 9:00am and ends at 1:00pm.

Drop off/Carline will begin promptly at 8:55 am. Our learning activities begin as soon as the children walk through the door - please do your best to get them to school on time so that they do not miss any

valuable teaching time! Please note that if you arrive after 9:10am, you will need to park and bring your child in through the Program Access Center entrance as the car-line will be closed so that all of our teachers can be in the classrooms to begin their day.

Pick up/Carline will begin at 12:45pm. Please call the Children's Academy phone 704-716-4608 in any event of being tardy. NC state child care laws limit the amount of time a child can be in care in an unlicensed preschool to four hours. For this reason, **it is imperative that your child is picked up by 1:00pm.** Please be respectful of this rule and do your best to arrive on time to pick up your child. If you are coming into the carline after 1pm, there will be a late fee assessed of \$1 per minute. You will get a verbal warning the first time you are late, but if it occurs more than once, we have no choice but to issue fines and will charge your YMCA account automatically.

Early pick up: Please let the program director or your child's teacher know at morning drop off if your child will be picked up early. Teachers will take note and have your child ready to be picked up at the appropriate time.

Photo ID Required for pick-up:

On your application you listed the individuals who are authorized to pick up your child. **Anyone picking up a child MUST present a valid photo id at pick-up.** This will be checked at car-line or by the teachers, if you are walking in to pick-up. You **MUST** have this id with you every time you pick-up! If your child is going home with a friend (who's parent may not be one of your authorized pick-up contacts) please send a written note with the name of the person who is picking your child up and give it to the program director or your child's teacher. Please also note that if your child is being picked up by another individual, that individual **MUST** have an appropriate child safety seat. By law, we are not able to release a child to a vehicle that does not have an appropriate car seat.

Cell phone use

Using a cell phone while in the carline puts all of our children at risk. Distracted drivers in a small area where staff and children are walking back and forth is simply not acceptable. We will strictly enforce this policy! If you are on your phone in the carline (this includes talking, texting, playing games, etc.) you will be given one warning and one warning only. If you are on your phone again during carline, you will lose your carline privileges for the remainder of the week and all of the following week. The safety of our children is not something that we take lightly and we regret that we must resort to such measures. Please communicate this to anyone else who may be picking up your child.

Also, remember that carline is a time for you to communicate with your child's teacher. The time allotted for this is very brief and they may have important (or just plain fun) information to share with you. Please be respectful and give them your full attention during these times Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding.

Inclement Weather and Carline:

Unfortunately there will be days when car line is not available due to poor weather conditions. We will do our best to continue drop off process in a light drizzle, but anything more significant will require you to walk in to the facility.

Drop-off

- You may elect to drop off directly in your child's classroom or in the Teen Center. Children will be lined up on the walking rope and taken to class from that area to help ease congestion in the hallway.

Pick-up

- When it is raining, or the ground is excessively wet, we do not have a place to safely line up the nearly 100 children who are in our care each day and ask that you come in to pick-up. To prevent hallway crowding on days when afternoon car line is not available, some of our classes will gather in the Teen Center. Children in classroom numbers 1, 3, & 6 will meet in the Teen Center with their belongings. Children in rooms 2, 4, & 5 will remain in their classrooms for pick-up.

IF THERE IS NO CAR LINE YOU MUST PARK IN A DESIGNATED SPACE – DO NOT PARK IN THE CARLINE LANES UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Please note that if there is not an assigned staff member standing at the side door to monitor those coming into the program area, the door will remain closed and locked. You will be required to enter through the Program Access Center (closest to the pool and dance studios) and scan your membership card. The side door is NOT a normal parent/member entrance and will remain locked at all times when car line is not in session. Please do not attempt to knock on the door to gain admittance through the side or ask a YMCA staff member to let you in – you will be asked to walk around to the Program Access Center.

CARLINE PROCEDURES WILL NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE 2nd WEEK OF SCHOOL – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th 2019 for the Navigators, Adventurers, Trailblazers, and TK classes.
CARLINE PROCEDURES WILL NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE 3rd WEEK OF SCHOOL – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th 2019 for the Explorers.

Policies:

Sick Policy: For the safety and well-being of all of the children we care for, the following health and wellness policy will be strictly enforced. To protect your child and to help contain illness, we will not accept children at our Children’s Academy if there are evident signs of the following symptoms:

- Fever (100 degrees or higher)
- Continuous and/or colored nasal drainage
- Continuous/persistent coughing
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- Sore throat
- Pink, gooey, or matted eyes
- Skin rash
- Open sores
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

Children may return to their class once they have been symptom free for 24 hours. If your child is at school and is exhibiting any of the above symptoms, you will be called to pick up your child immediately. Parents should exercise every precaution and keep their child home should other unusual symptoms occur.

We do our best to keep our facility clean and prevent the spread of germs. Toys and surfaces are cleaned with all the appropriate cleaning solutions throughout and at the end of each school day. Our classroom

floors are sanitized and vacuumed each day as well as professionally cleaned on a regular basis. Please notify us if your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness or condition (lice, strep, hand-foot-mouth disease, etc.) so that we may take extra precautions in our cleaning.

Medications: With the exception of medication for severe allergic reactions, the Morrison YMCA expects that all medications be administered at home before coming to school. However, if medication is required for allergies, please give the ORIGINAL PRESCRIPTION CONTAINER THAT IDENTIFIES THE PRESCRIBING PHYSICIAN, THE NAME OF THE MEDICATION, THE DOSAGE, AND THE FREQUENCY OF ADMINISTRATION to the program director or teacher who will make sure that the medication is stored appropriately. A signed medication consent form is required to be able to administer any medicine including epi-pens and will be kept in the classroom with your child.

Emergencies: All of our staff are certified annually in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid. We are well equipped to handle and treat routine cuts, scrapes, and bumps. In the case of serious illness or an accident involving your child we will provide appropriate care and contact you immediately. Be aware that in cases of a true emergency, 911 will be called first.

Discipline Policy: The philosophy of our program is based on the character development principles of Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Honesty and Faith. It is with respect that each teacher will handle every disciplinary situation. Our main objective is to provide positive reinforcement, consistent praise and encouragement. When a discipline situation arises the following steps will be taken:

1. **Redirect-** the child will be redirected from the inappropriate behavior to a more suitable choice or activity.
2. **Warning-** the child will be given a verbal warning and reminded that continuing the inappropriate behavior will result in a consequence.
3. **Logical Consequence-** the child will be given a logical consequence for their behavior such as being separated from the group for a short time or not being able to play with a certain toy, etc.
4. **Parent Conference-** if the above steps have not been successful, a conference with the parent and teachers will be held to discuss positive methods.

Morrison Family YMCA Biting Policy

The Morrison Family YMCA Childcare staff will take the following steps if a biting situation occurs:

- The biting will be interrupted (if possible) with a firm, "NO. We don't bite people.
- Staff will remain calm and not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted and have the bitten spot cleaned and cooled with an ice pack.
- Staff will remove the biting child from the situation. The child will then be isolated from the group for time out (either in a regular chair or high chair based on their age).
- Both parents will be notified of the biting incident and appropriate documentation will be filled out.
- Confidentiality of ALL children involved will be maintained.

Consequences — 35 months and under

- Children will be isolated from the group if they bite.
- After three biting occurrences where skin is peeled, broken, or bleeding in a 30 day period, the child will be suspended for 1 day.
- If behavior occurs within the first half of the child's expected stay, the parent will need to pick up the child immediately and suspension will begin that day.
- If behavior occurs within the second half of the child's expected stay, the suspension must be served for the child's next scheduled day in the program.
- Documentation of behavior will be signed by both staff and parent during pick up and 1 Day suspension has been communicated.

Consequences — 36 months and over

- Children will be isolated from the group if they bite
- Be required to leave the YMCA immediately and will not be able to return the following day. If they do not attend every day, they will serve the suspension the next day that class is in session.
- If a second bite occurs, the child will be suspended 2 days.
- If a third bite occurs, the child will be removed from the childcare program for a period of time based on the Program Director's discretion. *

*** Note on suspension:** If behavior occurs within the first half of the child's expected stay, the parent will need to pick up the child immediately and suspension will begin that day. If behavior occurs within the second half of the child's expected stay, the suspension must be served for the child's next scheduled day in the program. Documentation of Behavior will be signed by both staff and parent during pick up and suspension will be communicated.

Food at the Children's Academy:

Lunch: It is the parent's responsibility to pack a nutritious, well-balanced healthy lunch each day for their child. Teachers will monitor the children during lunch each day to insure safety and assist with any help the child may need. However, they will NOT be responsible for the order or amount your child chooses to eat of his or her lunch items nor will lunches be heated. You are encouraged to use insulated containers to keep your child's lunch appropriately hot or cold. **Please remember that there can be NO PEANUT PRODUCTS/NUTS or TREE NUTS of any kind sent in your child's lunch.**

Snack: It is up to each classroom to assign snack for the parents. Please be on the look-out for a reminder flyer in your child's folder. This will be sent home the last day of class before it is your turn (i.e., on Thursday of one week to let you know that you have snack the following Tuesday and Thursday).

We will be using a list of approved snack choices to help ensure that we are providing consistently healthy snacks. Please see the snack information sheet in your parent packet for more information. Please do not send in snack foods that are not on this list.

While the YMCA of Greater Charlotte is committed to a peanut allergy friendly facility, we cannot guarantee that peanuts will not find their way into our facility. We ask that you continue to take every precaution to protect yourself and your children from unwanted exposure to peanut allergens.

Birthdays:

In effort to maintain a healthy environment and to be sensitive to the increasing number of food allergies of our participants, birthdays may be observed only with a non-edible item. Children will be celebrated and given recognition for their special day (with crowns, stickers and/or special privileges) in the classroom. If you want to mark the occasion in the room with your child, you are welcome to do so by reading a favorite story or bringing in a non food treat for the class such as stickers, tattoos, pencils, bubbles, etc.

Children's Academy Calendar:

The Morrison Family YMCA will follow the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school calendar. **PLEASE SEE AND SAVE THE ATTACHED CHILDREN'S ACADEMY CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.**

In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the Charlotte-Mecklenburg closing guidelines. You may call our inclement weather hotline at 704-716-4637 for updates on openings and delays of the Morrison YMCA. In the event of a delayed opening the Children's Academy will follow the below procedures:

- If CMS is on a 1 hour delay we will open at 10:00am.
- If CMS is on a 2 hour delay the Children's Academy open at 11:00am.

For CMS Early Release dates the Children's Academy will operate on a normal schedule.

***Please note:** The Children's Academy does not prorate tuition rates for days missed due to individual illness, vacations, inclement weather or scheduled closings. We do not follow the CMS make-up day schedule.

Program Enrollment/Payments:

- Payments may be made via checking account draft or in-person payments at the member services desk on date of the payment schedule provided in your packet.
- Payments are due the 15th of the month prior to the month it is paying for (Example: September tuition is due on or before August 15th). If payment is not received by the 15th it will result in a **late payment fee of \$25. This fee is assessed automatically by our business office.** Failure to pay tuition by the 1st of the month in which it is paying for will result in the **termination of the child's enrollment** in the Children's Academy.
- Financial assistance is available. Please see a Sales & Service representative to learn more or to see if you qualify.
- A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$75/child is due at time of registration.
- A **non-refundable** supply fee of \$65 (\$85 for TK) is due at time of registration. Supply fees are distributed throughout the program over the course of the year. We utilize these funds in areas of

special events, holiday gifts, unique science and arts projects, homemade crafts and treats, yearbooks, graduation supplies and the end of the year extravaganza.

Program Cancellations:

Year-long enrollment: All cancellations require a **TWO WEEK WRITTEN NOTICE** prior to the payment date (listed on payment schedule in parent packet). Cancellations after this time will result in a prorated charge for the session regardless of whether the child attended. Registration and supply fees are non-refundable.

Parent Expectations:

Our hope is that the Children's Academy is a wonderful experience for both you and your child. Over the course of the year, we hope that you feel welcomed and valued by our staff. We feel blessed to have your trust in the care and development of your child. Please feel free to share your questions, comments, or concerns with the program Director or your child's teachers. To help us meet your child's needs, we ask the following:

- Follow policies and procedures outlined in this handbook
- Maintain open communication with teachers and Academy staff. For instance, children's actions often reflect situations that are experienced at home (i.e. death of a pet, family changes, moving, etc.) If any such experiences occur, please inform the directors or teachers so that we will better meet the needs of your child.

YMCA of Greater Charlotte Child Care Guidelines:

YMCA Preschools are not licensed and regulated by the State Department of Child Development. YMCA of Greater Charlotte preschools adhere to YMCA Quality Standards and our guidelines meet or exceed state requirements. These standards are available at your request.

Children may NOT participate in the following programs or a combination of the following programs for more than FOUR HOURS in a calendar day in any YMCA of Greater Charlotte or combination of YMCAs in Greater Charlotte: Children's Enrichment & Program Center, Children's Academy, Afterschool and/or Kid's HQ. This means that you will not be able to utilize the CEPC (at any YMCA in Greater Charlotte) for your child if they have already used the Children's Academy that day. *However*, you are able to use recreational programming on the same day your child has preschool. For example, if your child attends school on M/W/F, you may not bring them to the CEPC in the afternoon on those days, but you can bring them to a soccer clinic, Kids Fitness class, dance class, etc.



Children's Academy Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do I register my child for the Children's Academy?

A. You can fill out an application in person at the branch or register online.

Q. What ages does your preschool serve?

A. We serve children who are between 18 months (as of 8/31) and five years.

Q: My child has a birthday soon, will they be moved up to the next age group?

A, No. The class they are placed in remains their class for the entire year, just as it would in an elementary school setting. Our classes are all based on your child's age as of 8/31 of the given school year and our curriculum is designed to grow with them throughout the year.

Q. Does my child need to be potty-trained?

A. No, but we do ask that if your child is not FULLY potty trained that you continue to send them in pull-ups. We will do our best to work with you to mirror the approach you are using at home, however we cannot take children to the bathroom more than once every 45 minutes to an hour.

Q. When is preschool in session?

A. We start just after Labor Day and go up until the Friday before Memorial Day each year.

Q. How do I know when school is not in session?

A. You will be provided with a school year calendar that notes days off of school (workdays, holidays, etc.) as well as parent events that you are invited to attend. In addition, these dates will be noted on the monthly calendar you receive from your child's teachers.

Q. What time can I drop off / pick up my child?

A. Drop off begins at 8:55 and pick up runs from 12:45-1:00pm.

Q. Where do I drop off / pick up my child?

A. You can use the Morrison YMCA building carline. You are also welcome to walk your child into their classroom any time!

Q. What is your pick-up procedure?

A. For the safety of your child, participants will only be released to the legal guardian or responsible adult listed on the child's registration form. Every adult must present a government-issued photo ID during pick-up each day. In the event that a child will be picked up by an adult not listed on the registration form, written permission from the parent (we prefer by email!) and a photo ID must be shown during rides out. Thank you for helping to expedite this process by having your ID ready. If there are special circumstances involving custody issues you must provide the Director with legal documentation of these arrangements.

If you are utilizing a carline, please do not get out of your car in order to drop-off your child. Your child will be escorted to and from your vehicle as needed. We are not authorized to buckle your child into the car. If they are unable to do so themselves, you may get out and help them.

If you need to drop-off late or pick-up early, please be prepared to park in a designated parking space and walk in to the preschool area.

Q. How do I get in touch with preschool staff during the day?

A. We can be reached by email at morrisonchildrensacademy@ymcacharlotte.org or by phone at 704.716.4608

Q. How will you get in touch with me in the event of emergency?

A. We will contact you by phone in the event of an emergency so please be sure to provide us with the best phone numbers that we can use to reach you. In the event that we cannot get a hold of you, we will call others on your emergency contact list. To update numbers and emergency contacts, please login to your online account:

<https://programs.ymcacharlotte.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Default.aspx?TabId=396&returnurl=%2fPersonifyEbusiness%2fDefault.aspx%3fTabID%3d61>

Q. What do I pack?

A. Please send a backpack that is large enough to hold the following:

- Your child's lunch (nut free)
- A refillable water bottle
- A set of extra clothes that will be kept in your child's bag in case we need to change them for any reason – keeping in mind that children need to be changed for a variety of reasons!
- Their daily folder (provided to you by the YMCA)

Q. Is there anything I should NOT send to school?

A. Please do NOT send toys, electronics, or any food with nuts.

Q. How will I know what is happening in my child's day?

A. Daily communication forms are sent home in our Explorers and Navigators classes. All age groups receive monthly class calendars and will receive a class email from the teachers approximately twice a month to fill you in on specific classroom activities. In addition, email communication will be sent from the program administrators from time to time. You are always welcome to ask questions and arrange for time to talk in

depth with your child's teachers. Each teacher does have access to an email account as well. In addition, your child will most often be walked to the car by their teacher, who will be happy to share some updates from that day!

Q. What if my child has developmental or physical needs?

A. The YMCA will make every reasonable accommodation possible to serve children regardless of their developmental or physical abilities. Please contact the Director at least two weeks in advance to discuss modifications that would be helpful for the success of your child at the Morrison Family YMCA. The more information we have, the better our chance is for success.

Q. What is your health and wellness policy?

A. If your child develops symptoms of illness during their stay, parents will be notified and will need to pick up their child immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the staff will call other emergency contacts listed on the account.

CHILDREN WHO HAVE THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS SHOULD REMAIN AT HOME UNTIL THEY ARE SYMPTOM FREE FOR 24 HOURS UNLESS A WRITTEN NOTE FROM THE CHILD'S PHYSICIAN IS GIVEN, STATING THAT THEIR SYMPTOMS ARE NOT CONTAGIOUS. Some of these symptoms include, but are not limited to:

Sore Throat	Skin Rash	Open Sores	Pink Eye	Head Lice
Coughing	Fever	Diarrhea	Vomiting	

Q. What is your medication policy?

A. Please administer all medications at home whenever possible. If medications are required during the afternoon, a "Medication Authorization Form" must be filled out and medications provided to the office staff in the original container in a plastic bag with the child's name clearly written on the outside. All medications including over the counter items, must be dispensed by the office personnel. Please contact the Director if your child's allergy requires special consideration.

Q: How do I cancel or make a change to my child's registration?

A. As a courtesy, we ask that you let the program administrators know of changes via email to morrisonchildrensacademy@ymcacharlotte.org. You can also fill out change forms at the Sales and Service desk.

Q. How can I get a copy of my receipt to submit for reimbursement from my flexible spending account?

A. For questions regarding tax receipts, please log into your account on the website – you'll be able to generate a statement from there. Our Tax ID# is 56-1045299.

Program Add-Ons

Learning and fun doesn't have to end at 1:00 PM! Join us for specialized programs for your 3 - 5 year old every afternoon! Our fall session begins October 2 and runs through December 15, with a break during the week of Thanksgiving. You can drop off your child at the program location or if your child is enrolled in the Children's Academy, we will transfer them to any program held at the Morrison Family YMCA that begins at 1:15 PM.

AFTERNOON PROGRAMS HELD AT THE MORRISON YMCA

MONDAYS

- JUMP BUNCH | 1:15 PM – 2:00 PM: Jump Bunch introduces your preschooler to age-appropriate gross motor skills and fun-filled activities intended to nurture a lifelong commitment to fitness and physical activity.

TUESDAY

- GYMNASTICS - PRESCHOOL BASICS | 1:15 PM – 2:00 PM: A perfect time to get the wiggles out! This 45 minute clinic introduces kids to basic gymnastics skills: front and backward rolls, handstands and cartwheels. We utilize all pieces of equipment in the gym (bars, beam, vault and trampoline) in fun obstacle courses with friends.
- PRIMARY DANCE | 1:30 PM -2:00 PM (4 & 5 YEAR OLDS): This class is designed for new and returning students to explore more complex tap and ballet concepts while continuing to execute basic dance elements. Concentration is on vocabulary, alignment and proper execution of movement as well as memorization and independence through sequential tasking. Classes meet once a week and students participate in the spring dance recital. Dance programming runs September 5 - May 19.

WEDNESDAYS

- PLAY WITH DOUGH | 1:15 PM -2:00 PM: Does your child LOVE to Play with Dough? We will make a new kind of dough each week and send you home with it as well as the recipes for all of our creations. Your little one will get some great math, science, and sensory action as they make various kinds of scented dough, snow dough, and even glittery slime! Plus we will start each day with some dough based color sorting games and building activities.
- MULTI-SPORT CLINIC | 1:15 PM -2:00 PM: YMCA Multi-Clinics are designed to teach players the fundamentals of soccer, basketball and Flag Football. When participating in YMCA clinics, participants are sure to improve on skills, make new friends and have fun. Clinics at the YMCA are a great lead up for participating in a class or league setting.

THURSDAYS

- MULTI-SPORT CLINIC | 1:15 PM – 2:00 PM

- MINI CHEFS IN TRAINING | 1:15 PM – 2:00 PM: Do you have a mini who loves to be in the kitchen with you? Mini Chefs is a perfect class for your little to learn basic kitchen safety and skills, begin gaining confidence in their abilities, be adventurous in flavors and foods and make delicious treats!

AFTERNOON PROGRAMS OFFERED AT THE BALLANTYNE ARTS CENTER

Please note, we do not transport children from the Morrison YMCA to the Ballantyne Arts Center.

MONDAYS

- PRESCHOOL DANCE | 1:15 PM - 2:00 PM (3 & 4-year-olds): Combining tap and ballet, this class will develop your child's coordination as well as an understanding of dance concepts and terminology. Concentration is on vocabulary, alignment and proper execution of movement as well as memorization and independence through sequential tasking. Students will improve motor skills, learn basic ballet positions and begin work on simple tap movements. Classes meet once a week and students participate in the spring dance recital. Dance programming runs September 5 - May 19.
- KINDER KIDS DANCE | 1:15 PM - 1:45 PM (2 1/2 – 3-years-old): This class is an exciting first approach to dance. Focus is on coordination and rhythm introduced in creative and imaginative ways. Basic ballet steps and vocabulary are presented and taught. Classes meet once a week and students participate in the spring dance recital.
- ART EXPLORERS | 1:15 PM - 2:00 PM: Little hands and big imagination combine as young artists explore their creativity experimenting with age-appropriate mediums like paint and clay while introducing basic concepts. Sessions are designed for both beginning and returning students by exploring new themes and introducing new materials each session.

TUESDAYS

- ART EXPLORERS | 1:15 PM -2:00 PM

WEDNESDAYS

- PRIMARY DANCE | 1:30 - 2:00 PM (4 & 5-year-olds)