

ALAKA'I ACADEMY



# PARENT HANDBOOK

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## 1. Mission

Alaka'i Academy's mission is to prepare the next generation of Hawaii's leaders by creating an environment with the right conditions to enable children to discover their potential and feel confident enough to pursue their dreams.

## 2. Philosophy

Alaka'i Academy follows a whole child approach to education. Students are not only intellectual, but also social and emotional beings, and all these dimensions interact to impact learning and performance.

We aim at developing leaders of all ages. Great leaders possess a balance of intellectual, emotional, and social skills. Their character traits are critical to their success. For that reason, in addition to a healthy academic curriculum, Alaka'i Academy spends time nurturing children's self-worth, while helping them discover their potential. Without empathy, for example, one can be bright, but arrogant. Without confidence, one aims low, ultimately living beneath his/her potential.

A balanced approach leads to healthy growth and prepares children to excel in a wide range of interactions. This experience overtime naturally evolves into leadership positions, influential roles and active contributions to family, school, and society.

## 3. Calendar

The School is open Monday thru Friday, except holidays. Please refer to the current school calendar for details concerning holidays and breaks.

## 4. Preschool Program

This program is geared to children from the age of 24 months to under the age of 6. The program is designed to help children develop social, emotional, personal and intellectual traits. We also focus on guiding the child in the discovery of their passions and unique skills. Classrooms are equipped with learning centers where supervised activities are conducted in groups and individually. The children's experience is further enhanced through outdoor play, gardening, theater, music and dancing, PE, eco-healthy practices, foreign languages, reading and writing skills, art, education, and problem solving exercises.

## 5. Toilet Training

Toilet training is part of the 2-year-old class curriculum. The program is effective and simple. Children are asked to sit on the toilet on a very strict schedule. Successful attempts are praised. Children are also encouraged to drink plenty water throughout the day, as to increase the chances of full bladder. Records are kept on diaper changes and toilet uses. Once a pattern of dried diapers and successful toilet uses are established, the diapers come off and the child is moved to underwear only. Children remain on the same toilet schedule after diapers come off until speech develops and the child can clearly articulate the need to use the toilet, at which point, children go on demand.

Certification for toilet training at Alaka'i Academy means that the child has awareness of the desire to go to the bathroom, they are able to ask to use the bathroom, proceed to the bathroom without being sidetracked and then taking off their pants and going to the toilet. The requirements also entail the child cleaning themselves, dressing themselves, washing their hands, and returning to class without becoming sidetracked.

## 6. Drop-in Program

This program is available to preschool age children already enrolled at Alaka'i Academy on a part-time basis. This option allows children to attend on unscheduled days. Based on available space.

## 7. Center Hours

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00AM until 5:30PM. The center's structured activities commence at 8:00 AM and conclude at 4:00 PM. There is closely supervised group play from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM. School ends at 5:00 PM, but we allows for a 30 minute grace period for student pick-up as the center closes promptly at 5:30 PM.

## 8. Admissions

Our academic year is from August to July. However, we will enroll a child year-round, if we have availability. A completed application and required medical forms are required prior to first day of school. A school tour and payment forms on file are also required.

## 9. Enrollment

The enrollment process includes submitting a series of documents and payment of a non-refundable registration fee. Tuition is billed in advance, and one week/month minimum prepayment is required, depending on billing frequency.

## 10. Early Withdrawal

If parents wish to withdraw the child from preschool program, they are required to give 30 days' written notice or further tuition charges will accrue.

## 11. Tuition & Fees

The Tuition Agreement indicates the rates, which vary depending on the child's age and the program selected; Part-time or Full-time. Tuition must be pre-paid at all times. For your convenience, we offer several payment options:

Semi-annual payment option. This option allows the parent to pay in full for 6 months at a time. Parents that choose this option receive 10% off their annual Tuition rate. (\$4,680.00)

Quarterly payment option. This option allows the parent to pay in full for three months at a time. Parents that choose this option receive 5% off their annual Tuition rate. (\$2,470.00)

Weekly payment option. This option allows parents to pay week by week. Payments must be made for at least 1 week at enrollment, and every week thereafter. Parents that choose this option must sign up for one of the automatic payment option.

Returned payments may be assessed a service fee of \$30.00 at the Academies discretion. Each transaction will be treated separately. Delinquent accounts are sent to collections and all costs associated will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian and billed accordingly. There is a sibling discount of 10% off the tuition amount for each additional child enrolled.

Tuition is billed weekly (52 weeks annually) every Friday. Payment is due no later than Monday. Pre-payments are credited for the following week. Should the Monday be a school holiday, payment is due the next business day.

## 12. Refunds

The tuition rate is the same regardless of the number of days a child attends. There are no reductions in tuition for illness, family vacations, school closures or any other reason.

## 13. Nutrition

Alaka'i Academy participates in the Hawaii Child Nutritional Program. Alaka'i Academy provides meals that are nutritionally balance and portioned appropriately for each child as directed by the USDA - Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Parents may also choose to send their children with their own lunch/snacks to school. If you decide on this option, please make sure that enough food is included in your child's lunch to provide a healthy balance of the food groups. Standard size lunch pails with child's name should be used. Please never send candy to school.

Although proper nutrition is an important part of our day, we will not force a child to eat. We will encourage them to take bites and monitor their consumption; however we will not punish a child for not completing their lunch.

## 14. TB & Immunization Requirements

Prior to enrollment, it is required that the parents submit a physician's report which covers the child's general health, physical and emotional maturity, special needs, TB results, and immunizations. A child may be exempt from immunization requirements when (a) his physician recommends against immunization on medical grounds and a letter is received by the school, or (b) his parents sign a medical release based on religious beliefs. A child may not begin school unless immunization or exemption requirements have been met.

## 15. Personal Belongings

Each child is provided with a cubby intended for personal items such as an extra change of clothes, pillow and blanket for nap time. Personal games and toys may not be brought to school. Toys can become lost or broken and this can be very distracting to a child. We are not responsible for forgotten or lost items. We will have a lost and found area. These items will be held for a month and then donated.

## 16. Outings/Field Trips

To enhance and expand on what is being taught in the classroom; safe extra-curricular outdoor field trips are conducted. Students chosen to participate in field trips are limited only by where we visit and overall safety needs of each individual student. It is at the teachers discretion, after consultation with the parent, whether or not a student will participate in a particular field trip. A parent/guardian signature is required on our Permission Form and trip fees, if any, will be kept minimal. Parents may be asked to chaperone; likewise, parents may volunteer.

Outdoor Activities/Park Visits -Outdoor walks occur near the center and community park visits occur on pre-arranged days depending on your child's class schedule. If you would prefer that your child not participate in these activities, please make your desires known to the staff. If you wish for your child to use sunscreen, please apply sunscreen prior to bringing your child to school.

## 17. Illness

Good health is an extremely important factor among all children and employees. Although daily disinfecting and positive health habits are implemented throughout your child's day, sickness can occur at anytime. Alaka'i Academy is not equipped to care for and provide the constant attention an ill child deserves. The following symptoms are signs that the child needs to stay home:

- Nasal Discharge
- Continuous coughing
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Temperature of 99.6 or higher (indicative of a fever)
- Diarrhea, Nausea, Vomiting (indicative of gastro-intestinal illness)
- Rash, Impetigo, Cellulites (indicative of viral illness, allergy, or bacterial infection)
- Pediculosis (head lice)

Should a child become ill while at Alaka'i Academy, he/she will be safely kept aside from other children and comfortable until an authorized person is contacted and arrives for pick up. We reserve the right to call a parent if a child is suspected of having a contagious illness. A child sent home due to a contagious illness should be seen by physician with recommended date child may return to school.

## 18. Late Pickup

Program ends at 5:00 PM, and the school closes its doors promptly at 5:30 PM. All children must be picked up before that time. After 5:30 PM, an effort to contact the parent(s) will be made. If no response, authorized individuals will be contacted next. If there is no contact 30 minutes after Center closure, a report will be made to the local authorities. A fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be charged for children picked up after 5:30 PM. This fee is payable at the time the child is picked up.

Continued tardy pickups will be addressed first with a written warning, second with a meeting with the parent and teacher, and if the tardy pickups continue, the child may be subject to removal from the program.

## 19. Special Accommodations

Alaka'i Academy makes reasonable efforts to accept children that require special accommodations. Parents/guardians requesting special accommodations must provide a written childcare recommendation from the child's source of health care. The academy may ask for a consultation between parent, staff, and any outside team members the parents deem beneficial. We all will take into careful consideration whether Alaka'i Academy has the staff and capabilities to provide the accommodations necessary for the safety and well-being of each individual student. Rates and fees may vary dependant on the availability and ability of Alaka'i Academy to provide care. If one-on-one supervision is required at anytime, parents will be informed of our decision and whether additional fees apply.

## 20. Dress Code

All children must come to school with a clean, neat appearance and be dressed appropriately for the day's activities. Comfortable clothes which allow children to run, jump, and engage in various activities are encouraged. Alaka'i Academy requires that socks be worn daily on all indoor play areas. Footwear is not allowed inside but is required for outdoor activities. Additionally, art projects may result in clothes becoming soiled. A daily bath, clean hair, clipped fingernails and brushed teeth are expected.

## 21. Change of Clothing

Children must have an extra change of clothes that is clearly labeled. If the child uses them, they will be sent home and must be replaced on the following school day. It is the parent's responsibility to replace them as the child grows into a new size.



## 22. Parental Involvement

Parent conferences are scheduled annually, usually in the spring. Special meetings may be scheduled at times that are mutually convenient for the parent and teacher.

Prospective parents need to schedule a tour with the front office prior to visiting the school. The best time for a tour is between 9:00 AM and 10:30 AM Monday through Friday.

Please refrain from discussing detailed subjects with your child's teacher when he/she is being dropped off. This is a significant time of the day when the teacher must be free to greet all children entering the class.

Parents who have a talent, career, or hobby that would be interesting to the children are encouraged to participate. We would love for you to make arrangements with the Director to set up a time to share this information with the children. Parents are also encouraged to share anything they may have to aid in our different curriculum studies. Parent volunteers are welcomed and encouraged to participate in our program. Please notify the Director if you have an interest in becoming involved. Please be sure to schedule your visit ahead of time so we can all be prepared for your visit.

## 23. Nap

Alaka'i Academy offers a nap/rest time for children daily between 12:30 PM and 2:30 PM. The children will be taking a nap in their respective classrooms on individual mats. The school will provide the plastic foam mat for nap/rest time. Bedding is not shared and is regularly laundered. Parent are requested to provide required bedding, including:

- Standard sized crib sheet w/ child's name (used to cover mats)
- Small blanket
- Very small pillow (optional)

Should a child awake between these hours, quiet activities are prepared.

## 24. Discipline

Teachers at Alaka'i Academy manage behavior in their classrooms in a non-punitive, age appropriate manner. We utilized the process of positive discipline, which instructs children as to what they should do rather than telling them what not to do. For example "We walk inside the building" rather than "No running".

Preschoolers will be encouraged to learn problem-solving skills and become self-correcting. They will be given the opportunity to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing their negative behavior. For example, if a child is having difficulty sitting quietly during a story, he/she will be asked to do a puzzle or draw a picture until they feel they are ready to rejoin the group. Teachers will assist in pointing out logical consequences to both positive and negative behavior.

Children are redirected to an alternate activity if their behavior continues to be inappropriate. An example is when a child is doing something that could hurt others, themselves, or destroying property and choosing not to use problem-solving techniques. Teachers will continue to be an active listener and support the child with conflict resolution. Parents will be notified of the behavior management strategies used and receive an incident report. Individual behavior management plans will be implemented. If a child's behavior is unmanageable within a group setting, parents will be consulted and an individual behavior plan implemented.

No child shall be subject to physical corporal punishment, humiliated, frightened, verbally abused, or denied food, rest or bathroom facilities. Children will never be disciplined for toileting accidents, sleep habits, or food consumption.

#### 25. Biting

We understand that at times children may bite. This is most prevalent in two year olds. Young children have difficulty expressing their feelings into words therefore occasionally they will bite. We will work with you as much as possible to help alleviate the problem. However, if biting cannot be controlled we will have to terminate your child's enrollment. You are welcome to re-enroll when the biting has subsided.

#### 26. Dismissal from School

A child may be dismissed by the school without prior notice if, in the opinion of the school, it is in the best interest of the child or the school to do so.

#### 27. Safety Procedures

Alaka'i Academy takes various measures in protecting the health and safety of the children. The safety of the children is our primary concern. All staff members are required to take CPR and First Aid training every two years. All staff members are familiar with our emergency disaster plan and their assigned duties.

First aid kits are available to care for minor injuries, cuts or scrapes. Fire and earthquake drills are conducted monthly. Fire extinguishers are available throughout the facility. Our school has a fire alarm system with pull down alarms, strobe lights, smoke detectors and sirens. Evacuation signs are posted throughout the building. The emergency exit signs in the hallways are illuminated in case of a power outage. Each classroom is equipped with an outside emergency exit.

When going on walking excursions, or otherwise leaving the school premises, additional personnel often accompany the teacher, assistant teacher and/or aide assigned to that class to help supervise the children.

## 28. Administration of Medications

Administering Medication - Medication is not normally dispensed to children. If failure to medicate poses a life-threatening situation, an exception may be made by Alaka'i Academy. A written doctor's note stating the medication is required, the type of illness or injury AND a statement that the condition is not contagious is required. You are also required to complete a Dispensing of Medication Authorization Form. Medications must be in the original pharmacy administered container and clearly labeled with your child's name, dispensing instructions, and the doctors name and contact number. We reserve the right to deny approval of a request under this Administering Medication policy.

## 29. Emergency/Disaster Preparedness

In the case of an emergency requiring evacuation, parents will be notified and the children will be supervised at the school until their parents arrive. During disasters, it's better to have children with parents/family, especially if the child takes medications or has other needs that may exacerbate during emergency. If evacuation is necessary, children will be taken to the nearest and safest area directed by local authorities and if possible, that information will be posted on Alaka'i Academy's doors. Keep in mind, that hurricane warnings are given anywhere from 36 - 48 hours before landfall. Parents should **not** have their children in school in this situation. Other disasters, like earthquake, tsunami, where impact may be less predictable, may still provide some lead time to pick your child up. Man-made disasters are more complicated, less likely to happen, and may be more immediate, but you are still expected to pick up your child as soon as possible after being notified by Alaka'i Academy. Phone lines may be interrupted during an emergency; however, your child will be continuously under our supervision until your arrival. Proper civil service departments will be notified once children are safe. Most disaster shelters operated by American Red Cross will not provide food/water for the first 2-3 days post disaster, since their immediate role will be to provide mass shelter and provide immediate triage and care. Food and other sustenance items will probably deploy once roads and food donations can be delivered from vendors or donations. The two designated mass shelters for large-scale disasters are currently: Kealakehe High School and Konawaena High School. Other shelters may be opened depending on the nature of the disaster. These two schools have the capacity to sustain hurricane force winds, etc and other needed infrastructure to house/shelter population.

## 30. Emergency Medical Care

In the event of an accident, first aid will be administered and an Accident-Injury Report will be created. In the case of an emergency, Alaka'i Academy will call 911 and contact the parent/guardian or authorized persons immediately. If ambulance assistance is needed and the child is not released from our care, an employee will be designated to accompany your child to the nearest hospital and shall remain in close contact with both the child and Academy. That employee will remain with the child until the parent/guardian/authorized individual indicated on the child's Information Record Form is properly identified through Academy records, and the parent/guardian verbally or in writing, assumes responsibility for the child's supervision. A signed release statement is requested from the parent/guardian. Information from the child's records will be used to obtain and provide helpful information.

### 31. Privacy

Alaka'i Academy stresses the importance of protecting the rights and privacy of children, their families, and our teachers. The practice of maintaining the confidentiality of verbal information and written records is a policy of our school. Anyone requesting children records/information from Alaka'i Academy must send a request form with a parent signature to our facility. We will not release academic documentation without a parent signature. The only exception to this rule applies to law enforcement agencies.

### 32. Three Strikes Policy

We have implemented a three strikes you are out policy regarding extreme misbehaviors, aggression (such as revenge hitting/biting) and/or other situations such as bullying and chronic teasing/disturbing behaviors.

### 33. Policy Changes

We reserve the right to change school policies at any time.

### 34. Communication / App

Alaka'i Academy utilizes a phone and web-based application called BRIGHTWHEEL to communicate with parents. To use this app an email address and cell phone number are required. The app has alerts and it is our preferred method of communication with parents. This technology allows the school to share videos, pictures, notes, accident reports, a record of check in/out, events and more. Please download the app from the iTunes or Google Stores. If urgent communication is required, we will call your cell phone listed on the app.