

# Infant Program “New Beginnings”



## **Parent Handbook**

Kiddie Academy of Bolingbrook  
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### **Introduction**

Kiddie Academy has developed a strong and meaningful preschool curriculum, *Life Essentials*<sup>®</sup>, that has been recognized both state-wide by the Gold Circle of Quality from ExceleRate Illinois and nationally by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

One of the most important components of a child's learning experience is the partnership between home and school. As you prepare to enroll your son or daughter in our program, our teachers and administrators will be available to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Feel free to contact us at 630-679-9400 or at [bolingbrook@kiddieacademy.net](mailto:bolingbrook@kiddieacademy.net).

### **Statement of Purpose**

Successfully navigating the milestones of early childhood development is essential in preparing your child for school. Our goal is to nurture and guide children, inspiring them to develop a lifetime love of learning. This is what distinguishes Kiddie Academy from traditional preschool.

### **Our Teaching Philosophy**

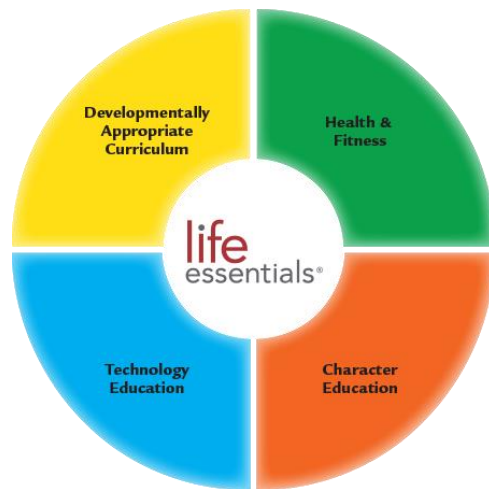
We recognize the need to provide equity in educational opportunities for each child, and we balance that need by including a range of approaches to learning, respecting diversity, and encouraging best practices. Kiddie Academy has strived to create a curriculum that not only focuses on developmentally appropriate academic standards, but also addresses the social and emotional development of the whole child.



## **Life Essentials**

The Kiddie Academy Life Essentials® curriculum is based on a central principle of early learning: children learn through direct experiences by using their own creativity in an environment that encourages curiosity and exploration, while teachers act as facilitators to guide and support play-based learning. Our curriculum supports programs, methods, activities and techniques to help children blossom into prepared students and good citizens.

Life Essentials® is based on four pillars of education: developmentally appropriate curriculum, technology, health & fitness and character education, giving your child a happier, healthier and more well-rounded foundation for the future.



### **Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum**

Our curriculum is based on a central principal of early learning- teachers getting to know children on every level, including how they learn, play and communicate. We personalize learning with individual attention fitting each child's interests and abilities. We use early childhood education research to establish best practices and intersperse the learning process with fun.

### **Technology Education**

We blend technology into each day as a natural extension of learning. Our curriculum teaches computer literacy skills and provides opportunities to use technology to learn in fun and exciting ways.

### **Health & Fitness**

The health of your child and the development of healthy habits is a priority. We focus on teaching children how to stay healthy by making good food choices, incorporating physical exercise and maintaining healthy personal habits every day. Healthy choices now will empower children to make healthy decisions later in life.

### **Character Essentials**

Teaching values is as fundamental as teaching children how to read. Character Education teaches the "whys" and "hows" behind the behaviors. Character Education is woven into daily experiences, enhancing children's relationships at home, school and in the community. We teach values through planned lessons and authentic interactions that are integrated into various group and individual activities.

## Early Learning Development

Here are some examples of milestones your child will meet by the end of the year:

<p><b>Language Development, Communication and Literacy (Birth through 9 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Younger infants use sounds, cries, facial expressions, and body language to convey needs.</li> <li>• Younger infants smile and use other facial expressions to initiate interactions with caregivers.</li> <li>• Younger infants begin to respond to verbal and nonverbal communication through the use of sounds and physical movements.</li> <li>• Younger infants demonstrate the ability to understand and convey thoughts through both nonverbal expressions and verbal cues, such as coos, babble or cries.</li> <li>• Younger infants begin to build the foundation for early literacy by exploring printed materials and building a capacity for reading printed materials.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Language Development, Communication and Literacy (7 months through 18 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older infants communicate and respond by grunting, nodding, and pointing.</li> <li>• Older infants use facial expressions, vocalizations, and gestures to initiate interactions with others</li> <li>• Older infants begin to understand and respond to the meaning of actions and sounds.</li> <li>• Older infants understand approximately 100 words relevant to their experiences and cultural context.</li> <li>• Older infant's language progresses from babbling to utterances and to first words. Toward the end of this age period, babbling decreases as children begin to build their vocabulary.</li> <li>• Older infants begin to initiate and actively engage in literacy activities with printed materials.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cognitive Development (Birth through 9 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young infants begin to focus on objects, sounds, and people.</li> <li>• Young infants actively explore the environment through the five senses</li> <li>• Young infants build the beginnings of creative expression through everyday interactions with their caregivers.</li> <li>• Young infants use sounds and body language to signal for more (ex: cries for more milk).</li> <li>• Young infants explore objects one at a time.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cognitive Development (7 months through 18 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older infants begin to recognize object characteristics, and build awareness of simple concepts through interactions and exploration.</li> <li>• Older infants increasingly engage with their caregivers and show enjoyment in activities and interactions that focus on music, movement, building, and play.</li> <li>• Older infants understand the concept of "more" in regard to food and play; signs or says, "more".</li> <li>• Older infants imitate/mimic counting, e.g., climbs stairs and mimics "one, two".</li> <li>• Older infants begin to use number words to label quantities, even if incorrect.</li> </ul>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Physical Development and Health (Birth through 9 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young infants are beginning to develop and coordinate the large muscles needed to purposefully move their bodies, such as rolling from back to stomach, sitting with and without support or scooting across the floor.</li> <li>• Young infants demonstrate the ability to coordinate their small muscles in order to move and control objects by beginning to reach for, grasp, and move objects.</li> <li>• Young infants signal to indicate needs, e.g., cries when hungry.</li> <li>• Young infants start to develop self-soothing skills, e.g., sucks fingers for comfort and regulation.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Physical Development and Health (7 months through 18 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older infants develop mobility, as they purposefully move from one place to another with limited control and coordination, such as crawling from one point to another, moving toys, or taking steps independently.</li> <li>• Older infants begin to gain control of their small muscles and purposefully manipulate objects by using increasingly complex finger and hand movements.</li> <li>• Older infants use nonverbal and verbal communication to indicate their wants and needs.</li> <li>• Older infants can complete some self-care tasks on their own, such as feeding self with foods that they have picked up on own.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Social/Emotional Development (Birth through 9 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young infants begin to build trust, initiate interaction, and seek proximity with one (or a few) primary caregiver(s).</li> <li>• Young infants initiate and briefly maintain social interactions with adults (establishes eye contact, coos to receive attention).</li> <li>• Young infants play with one object for a few minutes before focusing on a different object.</li> <li>• Young infants explore environment through senses (touches and mouths objects).</li> <li>• Young infants begin to share in simple emotions by reading facial and gestural cues, (repeats activities that make others laugh).</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Social/Emotional Development (7 months through 18 months)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older infants trust in, engage with, and seek reassurance from their primary caregiver(s). Children can confidently explore their environment when in close physical proximity to an attachment figure.</li> <li>• Older infants maintain more advanced levels of engagement, (crawling from one point to another, moving toys, or taking steps independently).</li> <li>• Older infants focus on one object or activity for a brief period of time, even with other objects close in proximity; still easily distracted.</li> <li>• Older infants rely on routines and patterns to maintain an organized state in order to focus.</li> <li>• Older infants share in both positive and negative emotions with caregiver(s) - shares in wonders, amazement, delight, and disappointment.</li> <li>• Older infants begin to have a greater awareness of own emotions, (says or gestures “no” to refuse, squeals and continues to laugh when happy).</li> </ul>

## **Infant- Toddler Transition Frequently Asked Questions:**

### ***What are the biggest changes between the infant and the toddler classrooms?***

In the infant classrooms, children are all on individual schedules and sleep in cribs according to their schedules at home.

In the toddler classroom, children are on a group schedule. The school provides the students with breakfast, lunch and two snacks, which the children eat together at tables. Teachers encourage children to self-feed with spoons and provide sippy cups for whole milk and water. The toddlers take one nap from 12:15-2:15pm (or until they wake up naturally) and sleep on a cot rather than a crib.

### ***Why does my child seem to be coming home tired?***

This is a big adjustment for children both emotionally and physically, so it is common for some of the children to go home tired or even a little moody. The children are moving away from some of their friends and the caregivers they have trusted and built relationships with, and some children need additional time to process this change. This is why we plan transitions on individual schedules to allow children enough time to begin to understand that this is a positive change.

In our Sprouts Room, children are engaged in various learning and gross motor activities together throughout the day. This room may seem a little more “fast-paced” than the infant classroom. Oftentimes the children transitioning are excited to participate in these activities, but it may lead to the children to be a little more tired than usual at home. Once transitioned and accustomed to the routines of the Sprouts classroom, the children typically revert back to their previous routines at home.

### ***What if my child doesn't sleep during nap time?***

This is a common concern among all parents. We find that since the children are much more active with planned gross motor periods and engaged in learning activities, the children tend to be ready for a nap. The room is dark with quiet music, and teachers help the children to sleep. If they do not nap, the children are encouraged to rest their bodies with quiet activities.

### ***How can I get in touch with the teachers during the day?***

As in the infant classroom, your child's new teachers will communicate with you via the Tadpoles app, so you will receive communications about your child's day in that new classroom. You can also feel free to call our office, as we are able to transfer your call to the classroom to speak with the teachers directly.

### ***Why does my child seem to be coming home in new outfits or a bit messier than before?***

The children are encouraged to explore the world around them when learning, through a hands-on approach. During meals, children are encouraged to self-feed with a spoon and to hold onto a sippy cup. While outdoors and at the park, the children are walking, running, climbing and using their senses to explore nature and their surroundings.