Olive Branch Academy

PARENT HANDBOOK

(Serving children Birth-12 years old)

"Planting a lifetime of Seeds."

2026-2027 Edition updated annually

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1. WELCOME TO OLIVE BRANCH ACADEMY

Welcome to Olive Branch Academy. We are honored that you have chosen our program to be part of your child's early learning journey. We understand that choosing a childcare provider is one of the most important decisions families make, and we are committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment for every child in our care.

At Olive Branch Academy, we believe that early childhood is a special time filled with opportunities for discovery, growth, and learning. Our team is dedicated to supporting each child's development by providing meaningful experiences that encourage curiosity, creativity, and confidence.

We strive to create a warm and welcoming environment where children feel secure, respected, and valued. Through play-based learning, positive guidance, and daily routines, children are encouraged to build friendships, develop independence, and grow socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and spiritually.

We also believe that strong partnerships with families are essential to a child's success. Open communication and mutual respect allow us to work together to support each child's individual needs and development.

This handbook has been created to help families understand our policies, procedures, and expectations. Please take time to review the information carefully and keep it as a reference throughout your child's enrollment.

Thank you for trusting Olive Branch Academy with the care of your child. We look forward to partnering with your family and supporting each child as they grow and learn in a loving environment.

2. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a loving, safe, and nurturing environment where children are encouraged to grow intellectually, socially, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Program Philosophy

It is the philosophy of Olive Branch Academy that early childhood should be a time of fun, warmth, security, exploration, discovery, and growth. Young children are naturally creative and curious, and our team strives to nurture and encourage these qualities in every child in our care.

Within the framework of our philosophy is a strong curriculum that guides our team in supporting each child as they reach important developmental milestones. Healthy living, active listening, creative play, sharing, and meaningful conversation are just a few of the skills we intentionally incorporate into our daily learning experiences.

Olive Branch Academy operates with a faith-based foundation. As part of our daily routine, children may participate in a brief prayer before meals and may hear age-appropriate messages that encourage kindness, gratitude, and respect for others. These practices are intended to support positive values and create a caring and respectful environment for all children.

Mantra

Families First



Program Goals

At Olive Branch Academy, our goals are to:

Support Whole-Child Development

Provide age-appropriate experiences that promote children's intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth.

Create a Safe and Nurturing Environment

Maintain a warm, secure, and welcoming environment where every child feels valued, respected, and supported.

Encourage Exploration and Learning Through Play

Provide opportunities for children to explore, create, problem-solve, and develop independence through play-based learning and guided activities.

Promote Positive Social Skills

Help children learn kindness, cooperation, communication, and respect for others through daily interactions and modeling.

Partner with Families

Build positive relationships with families and maintain open communication to support each child's growth and development.

Our Approach to Learning

At Olive Branch Academy, we believe children learn best through hands-on experiences, meaningful interactions, and play-based exploration. Our program provides a balance of teacher-guided activities and child-led learning opportunities that support curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving.

Our team creates engaging learning environments where children are encouraged to explore, ask questions, and develop confidence in their abilities. Daily activities are designed to support early literacy, language development, social skills, physical development, and creative expression.

We recognize that every child develops at their own pace. Our educators observe and support each child's individual strengths and needs while providing age-appropriate guidance and encouragement.

Through consistent routines, positive interactions, and engaging experiences, we strive to foster a lifelong love of learning while helping children build the foundational skills needed for future success.

3. CENTER INFORMATION

LOCATION:
Olive Branch Academy
24466 Red Arrow Highway
Mattawan, MI 49071
Phone: 269-668-3300
Email: Olivebranchacademy1@gmail.com
Website: Olivebranchacademy.net
Tax ID Number: 85-3563677

HOURS OF OPERATION

Olive Branch Academy is open **Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., year-round (January through December)**.

Children must be picked up no later than **5:30 p.m.**

A late pick-up fee of **$5.00 per minute, per child** will be charged if a child is picked up after 5:30 p.m. These fees will be added to the following week's invoice.

Holiday & Scheduled Closures

OBA will be closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Memorial Day	Independence Day	Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day	Day after Thanksgiving	Christmas Day	Good Friday

In addition to the holidays listed, Olive Branch Academy reserves the right to adjust the closure schedule when holidays fall on weekends or when observance of a holiday is moved to a different weekday. Families will be notified in advance of any additional or adjusted closure days. Annual closed days are located on the parent board in the foyer.

Additional closures or early dismissals will be communicated in advance.

Normal tuition is charged for all scheduled days of operation listed above.

Due to the number of part-time enrollments and variable schedules, substituting, trading, or changing a child's scheduled days as a result of center closures or scheduled days off may result in additional tuition charges.

4. ENROLLMENT & WITHDRAWAL

Enrollment is open to children who meet licensing age requirements.
Parents must provide all required enrollment forms prior to attendance.

A **written notice of withdrawal** is required. Tuition obligations remain in effect through the notice period.

ENROLLMENT / ADMISSION

Children ages **6 weeks through 12 years** are eligible to enroll in our childcare and preschool programs. Admission requirements and enrollment procedures are as follows:

1. Complete all required enrollment documents:

- Child Information Card (CIC) *(updated annually)*
- Child Registration Form
- Child Abuse Prevention Acknowledgment *(updated annually)*
- Health Appraisal *(updated annually)*
- Written Information Packet Acknowledgment *(updated annually)*
- Tuition Withdrawal Form
- Immunization records *(updated per immunization given)*

2. Read and agree to all policies outlined in the Parent Handbook.

3. Pay the **annual non-refundable registration fee** at the time of enrollment.

- $55 for the **first child**
- $50 for **each additional child**

If initial enrollment occurs **between June 1 and August 30**, the **first annual registration fee due in September will be waived**.

Enrollment is accepted on a **first-come, first-served basis** once all required documents and fees have been received. Children will be placed in programs based on **age, developmental needs, Director discretion, and State Licensing requirements**.

Please note: **We do not offer a family tuition discount.**

WITHDRAWAL

If a child needs to be withdrawn from the center, **a two-week written notice is required**. Additional notice is always appreciated. If a child is withdrawn without providing the required two-week notice, the parent(s)/guardian(s) remain responsible for paying the **two weeks of tuition**.

If the balance is not paid, **late fees may apply for up to 30 calendar days**, after which time the account may be **turned over to a collection agency**.

Any personal belongings left at Olive Branch Academy will be held for **7 calendar days**. After that time, unclaimed items will be **donated to charity**.

If a child's behavior requires excessive teacher attention to the extent that it **disrupts the program or significantly alters the classroom environment**, resulting in reduced supervision or attention for other children, the child may be **withdrawn from the program immediately**. A written or verbal explanation will be provided by the **Program Director and/or Owner**.

WITHDRAWAL (Continued)

Olive Branch Academy maintains a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate behavior that compromises the safety or well-being of others. A child may not remain in the program if the following behaviors occur:

1. Consistent disrespect toward teachers, themselves, or peers.
2. Physical harm toward another child or themselves.
3. Ongoing disruption of the classroom environment, including repeated disregard for center guidelines despite consistent reminders.
4. Biting Policy:
   We understand that occasional biting may be developmentally appropriate for some young children. If biting becomes frequent, a meeting with the Program Director and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be scheduled to develop a behavior support plan. If the plan is not successful, the Program Director may determine it necessary to withdraw the child from the current program until the child is developmentally ready to return. In certain circumstances, the child may be withdrawn immediately if deemed necessary by the Program Director and/or Owner.

While we strive to meet the needs of all children, our environment may not always be the best fit for every child. The Program Director and/or Owner reserve the right to determine enrollment or dismissal based on the needs of the program and the well-being of all children.
If a child is dismissed from the program by the Program Director and/or Owner, no refund will be given for the current week's tuition. If tuition has been prepaid beyond the current week, 50% of the remaining prepaid tuition will be refunded.

Staff Babysitting Policy

We encourage professional relationships between families and staff. Any **babysitting arrangements or offers of employment must be made outside of staff working hours and independent of Olive Branch Academy**.

Olive Branch Academy reserves the right to **immediately dismiss a child from the program if outside employment arrangements interfere with an employee's scheduled availability or responsibilities at the center**.

5. FEES / TUITION POLICY

Tuition is processed through a secure payment system called Tuition Express. Weekly tuition payments will be automatically withdrawn from your designated checking account each Thursday.

Olive Branch Academy does not accept cash, checks, or money orders.

Families enrolled prior to 2021 who previously used Kiddie U Child Care and Preschool or Kiddie U Academy payment agreements will have their existing Tuition Express authorization transferred to Olive Branch Academy.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that a valid payment method is on file. If a card or account on file is no longer active, updated payment information must be provided prior to the next billing cycle. Failure to update payment information may result in bank processing fees and/or declined payment charges.

If the scheduled billing date falls on a holiday, tuition will be processed on the preceding business day when necessary.

TUITION AGREEMENT

At the time of enrollment, a set weekly schedule is established and tuition is based on that schedule.

- Temporary changes to a child's schedule do not qualify for tuition reductions.
- Permanent schedule changes must be submitted in writing at least two (2) weeks in advance and must be approved by administration in order for tuition adjustments to be made.

PAYMENT TERMS & AGREEMENT

By signing the Written Information Packet acknowledgment, parents/guardians agree to all policies outlined in this handbook, including tuition obligations, withdrawal requirements, and annual registration fee processing.

LATE PAYMENTS / RETURNED PAYMENTS

A fee of $35.00 will be applied for any insufficient funds or declined payments.

REFUND POLICY

There are no tuition refunds for illness, vacation, family emergencies, inclement weather closures, or other unforeseen center closures.

ACCOUNT DELINQUENCY

If tuition becomes more than two (2) weeks past due, the child will be withdrawn from the program. The account may be referred to a collection agency, and the family will be responsible for any associated collection costs.

If tuition is split between parents/guardians, both accounts must remain in good standing for continued enrollment. If tuition is split between parents/guardians, both accounts must remain in good standing for continued enrollment.

TUITION ADJUSTMENTS

Tuition rates are reviewed annually and are subject to change effective each September. Families will be notified of any changes in advance when possible.

SUPPLIES / INCIDENTAL FEES

If a child runs out of personal supplies during care, the following fees will apply and be added to the weekly tuition withdrawal:

- Diapers provided by OBA: $5.00 per diaper
- Wipes provided by OBA: $6.00 per package

PAYMENT TERMS & AGREEMENT

By signing the Written Information Packet acknowledgment, parents/guardians agree to all policies outlined in this handbook, including tuition obligations, withdrawal requirements, and annual registration fee processing.

REGISTRATION FEES

There is an annual non-refundable registration fee of:

- $55.00 for the first child
- $50.00 for each additional child in the family

This fee is withdrawn annually through Tuition Express on the second Thursday in September.

For initial enrollments occurring between June 1 and August 30, the registration fee will be collected at enrollment and the first September withdrawal will be waived. Beginning the following year, the annual September withdrawal will apply.

6. TEACHER DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Applies only to children enrolled in the Caterpillar, Butterflies, Bumblebees, and School-Age programs.

This discount program is available to families in which a parent/guardian is employed as an **elementary, middle school, or high school teacher and/or school district administrator**.

Eligibility requires **current verification of employment**, and all discounts must be **requested in writing by the parent/guardian**.

Discount eligibility is as follows:

- **Spring Break:** If the child(ren) are kept home during Spring Break, one (1) week (5 days) of tuition may be waived.
- **Christmas Break:** If the child(ren) are kept home during Christmas Break, up to two (2) weeks (10 days) of tuition may be waived.

All discounts are **applied only when requested and approved in advance**. No retroactive credits will be issued.

No other school closures, holidays, or breaks are included in this discount program.

- Families may request to withdraw their child(ren) during summer break and request to hold their enrollment spot for fall. This must be approved by the Program Director in advance. **Enrollment is not guaranteed without written approval.**
- The standard annual vacation credit does not apply to families participating in the Teacher Discount Program.

If unexpected school closures or delayed school start dates occur, **regular tuition is still required to maintain the child's enrollment spot**.

Olive Branch Academy reserves the right to **modify or discontinue this discount program at any time**.

All tuition policies apply regardless of attendance, including holidays, weather closures, illness, vacations, or school calendar changes, unless otherwise stated in an approved written program discount.

7. SECURITY SYSTEM

For the safety of our children and staff, Olive Branch Academy (OBA) utilizes a **secure entry kiosk system**. Families may access the center using a **personal access code or fingerprint scan**.

Please **do not share your assigned door code with anyone**. Access codes are intended only for authorized parents and guardians.

The **doors remain locked at all times**. Visitors must use the **doorbell located at the entrance**, and a staff member will assist them.

For security purposes, **parents and guardians must accompany their child at all times when entering or exiting the building**. Please ensure that the door **closes securely behind you** and do not hold the door open for others. Each family must use their **own access code or fingerprint** to enter the building.

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that **only individuals listed on the child's authorized pick-up list are granted access to the building using their assigned code or entry method**.

These procedures help us maintain a **safe and secure environment for all children, families, and staff**.

Lobby Security Procedure

For the safety and security of all children, families, and staff at Olive Branch Academy (OBA), **do not allow or admit any individuals through the second set of lobby doors**.

If someone is waiting in the entryway, please **direct them to remain in the first section of the entrance/lobby area** and **notify a staff member immediately** that there is a visitor present.

Only OBA staff members are authorized to grant access beyond the secured lobby area.

These procedures are in place to maintain a **secure, controlled entry process at all times**.

8. PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

We understand that mornings and evenings can be busy, and our goal is to make drop-off and pick-up times as smooth and safe as possible for all families. The following procedures help ensure consistency, safety, and a positive transition for children.

Arrival / Drop-Off

1. Parents/guardians should assist their child in putting away belongings such as coats, boots, and personal items into their designated cubby.
2. Under no circumstances should a child be allowed to enter or exit the building without adult supervision. Children must not be dropped off at the entrance to enter the classroom alone.
3. The person dropping off or picking up is responsible for ensuring a team member is aware of the child's arrival and departure.
4. Parents/guardians should provide a brief and positive goodbye and then promptly leave the center. Consistent routines and short departures typically help children adjust more easily after separation.

Note: If a child arrives after 8:00 a.m., breakfast service may not be available.

We have found that children often settle quickly once parents have left, and we encourage consistent and confident morning routines to support a smooth transition.

Pick-Up Procedures

5. Children will only be released to individuals listed on the child's Child Information Card (CIC) or authorized pick-up list.
6. Staff may request photo identification if the person picking up is not a familiar or recognized adult.
7. In custody situations where a parent is not authorized for pick-up, a valid court order must be provided in advance. While we will make every effort to comply with custody arrangements, staff will not place children or employees in unsafe or confrontational situations.

Attendance & Timing Expectations

8. Children should not arrive more than 15 minutes before their scheduled program time without prior approval, and must be picked up no later than their scheduled pick-up time unless arrangements have been made in advance.
9. Late pick-up fees will be applied if a child is picked up after 5:30 p.m., at a rate of $5.00 per every 5 minutes late, and will be added to the following week's invoice.

If a child is picked up late more than two (2) times in one calendar month, a written warning will be issued. Continued late pick-ups after the warning may result in termination of enrollment.

Absences

If your child will be absent due to illness, vacation, or any other reason, please notify Olive Branch Academy as soon as possible.

If the center has not received notification and your child is more than one (1) hour past their normal arrival time, a staff member will contact the parent/guardian by phone or email to confirm the child's attendance for the day.

If no communication is received regarding a late arrival or absence, and the child arrives more than one (1) hour after their scheduled arrival time, the child may not be able to attend that day. This is due to staffing decisions that may have already been made based on expected attendance levels.

Arrival and Pick-up times

To ensure a consistent rest period for all children, drop-off and pick-up are not permitted between 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

This time is reserved for nap/rest time and allows children to rest without interruption.

If you need to pick up your child during this time, prior arrangements must be made with the Program Director. The Program Director will ensure your child is ready for pick-up in the front office at the scheduled time.

Closing Statement

Olive Branch Academy is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and positive environment for children while parents are at work. A confident and positive drop-off routine helps set the tone for a successful day for both children and families.

9. VARIABLE SCHEDULES *(Only applicable for families enrolled before January 1, 2023)*

Variable schedules are only accepted for families in which at least one parent/guardian has a career that requires a non-fixed schedule, and the child is enrolled at Olive Branch Academy for childcare services.

All monthly schedules must be emailed to Olivebranchacademy1@gmail.com at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of each month.

Scheduling Requirements

- A minimum of two (2) scheduled days per week is required for all variable schedule enrollments.
- Families will be billed for a minimum of two (2) days per week, regardless of attendance.
- Any additional scheduled days beyond the minimum will be billed accordingly.

Example:
If a child attends 1 day one week and 3 days the following week, billing would be:

- Week 1: 2-day minimum charge
- Week 2: 3-day charge

10. INCLEMENT WEATHER / UNEXPECTED CLOSINGS

In the event that Olive Branch Academy must close or modify operating hours due to inclement weather or other circumstances beyond our control, including requirements from State Licensing or state/local ordinances, families will be notified as early as possible.

Notifications will be sent via the Remind App and email no later than 5:30 a.m.

Normal tuition is due during these closures or delayed openings, as staffing and operational costs are incurred regardless of attendance. No tuition credits, refunds, or make-up days will be provided for inclement weather closures or emergency shutdowns.

Delayed Openings

In some circumstances, the center may operate on a delayed opening schedule due to weather or safety concerns. If a delayed opening is required, families will be notified through the Remind App and email as soon as a decision is made.

No Credit Policy

Closures, delayed openings, or early closures due to inclement weather or other emergencies are considered part of the normal operation risks of childcare services. No tuition credits, adjustments, or make-up days will be issued under these circumstances.

11. HEALTH INFORMATION / CHILD ILLNESSES

Olive Branch Academy is a **tree nut and peanut–free center**. For the safety of children with severe allergies, please do not send any food items containing peanuts, tree nuts, or nut oils in your child's lunch or snacks.

Additionally, please do not bring your child into the center while they are actively consuming foods containing peanuts or tree nuts. If your child has eaten foods containing nuts prior to arrival, please ensure their hands and face are thoroughly washed before entering the classroom.

Health Requirements

Each child (excluding school-age children, as applicable under licensing guidelines) is required to have a current Health Appraisal on file, including:

- Up-to-date immunization records - **Required at the time of enrollment.**
- A physical examination
- Signature from the child's healthcare provider

The Health Appraisal form includes sections for both parent and physician completion and signature. This documentation must be submitted within 30 days of enrollment.

Olive Branch Academy does not accept children who are not up to date on required immunizations, unless otherwise permitted under applicable state licensing exemptions.

If an updated physical or immunization record is required during the year, a notice and updated Health Appraisal form will be placed in the parent file approximately 30 days prior to expiration.

Illness at Drop-Off or During Care

Staff will not accept children who arrive visibly ill, have a fever, or show signs of rash or contagious illness.

If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately using the primary phone number on file. If there is no response within 10 minutes, additional emergency contacts will be called.

If a child requires one-on-one care due to illness, they should remain at home. Children who are unable to participate comfortably in daily activities due to illness will be sent home. A parent/guardian will be required to sign an illness report upon pick-up.

Exclusion Guidelines

Children must remain home or will be sent home if any of the following conditions are present:

- Fever with behavioral changes
- Lethargy, persistent irritability, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other signs of severe illness
- Uncontrolled coughing
- Blood in stool
- Diarrhea that cannot be managed in a childcare setting or is unrelated to diet/medication changes
- Vomiting
- Persistent abdominal pain
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Rash with fever or behavior change
- Pus or discharge from eyes
- Chicken pox
- Any confirmed or suspected contagious illness

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease:

This illness is highly contagious. Children must be fever-free and free of blisters/lesions for at least 24 hours before returning.

Return to Care Policy

A child must be fever-free for 24–48 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to care.

Final clearance for return is at the discretion of the Program Director and/or Owner, based on the health and safety of all children and staff.

A doctor's note is required for return after any communicable disease. The note must state: "This is not a contagious disease and cannot be transmitted to other children in the center."

Health & Hygiene Practices

Staff and children follow state-required handwashing procedures. When off-site on approved field trips or outings, hand sanitizer may be used when handwashing facilities are not available.

Enrollment at Olive Branch Academy includes permission for staff to use hand sanitizer as needed during such situations.

Exclusion of Ill Individuals

Any employee, child, or volunteer showing signs of illness will be excluded from the center.

If a child becomes ill during the day, they will be separated from the classroom and supervised in the office until pick-up. Parents/guardians are required to pick up their child within one (1) hour of notification.

Staff or volunteers who become ill during work hours will be sent home immediately and replaced as needed.

COVID-19 / Communicable Disease Policy

Children or staff who are **sick with symptoms of COVID-19** should not attend until they meet illness return guidelines.

12. NOTIFICATION OF ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, ILLNESSES & INCIDENTS

In the event a child is exposed to or contracts a communicable disease (including but not limited to Chicken Pox, Pink Eye, Strep Throat, or Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease), notification will be sent to families via the Remind App.

Any child diagnosed with a communicable illness will not be permitted to return to the center until the contagious period has passed and return-to-care requirements have been met.

In the event of a medical emergency, injuries or incidents parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible using the contact information provided on the Child Information Card. Notification may be made by telephone, text message, email (if provided), or through the Procare Engagement App.

If a parent/guardian cannot be reached within 10 minutes, staff will begin contacting the additional emergency contacts listed on the child's information card.

If emergency medical care is required, a team member will contact emergency medical services (911). The child will be transported to the nearest appropriate medical facility. When possible, staff will also attempt to contact the child's physician.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency while at Olive Branch Academy, a trained team member will administer basic first aid as appropriate.

The parent/guardian will be notified immediately by:

- Phone call from the Director
- Text message (if a mobile number is on file)
- Email (if provided)

If a parent/guardian cannot be reached within 10 minutes, staff will begin contacting the additional emergency contacts listed on the child's enrollment form.

If emergency medical care is required, a team member will contact emergency medical services (911). The child will be transported to the nearest appropriate medical facility. When possible, staff will also attempt to contact the child's physician.

Injury and Incident Reports

Any injury or incident that does not require emergency medical treatment will be documented in an incident report and provided to the parent/guardian through the Procare Engagement App. The incident report must be reviewed and signed by both the parent/guardian and the Program Director.

Parents/guardians will also be notified by the Program Director via phone call or text message regarding any noticeable injury, including but not limited to bumps, scrapes, bruises, bite marks, cuts, or bleeding.

Medication Administration

Medication may only be administered to a child after a completed Medication Authorization Form is on file.

All medications must:

- Be delivered directly to a staff member by a parent/guardian
- Be in the original container
- Include clear dosage instructions
- Be labeled with the child's first and last name
- Prescription medication must have the pharmacy label

Reporting Requirements

In the event of any serious incident, injury, or communicable disease exposure, the Program Director and/or Owner will notify parents/guardians and licensing authorities as required by state regulations in a timely manner.

NOTIFICATION OF ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, ILLNESSES & INCIDENTS (CONTINUED)

The Medication Information Form must include the dosage amount, frequency, and administration times. This information must match the instructions provided on the medication container.

Medication will only be administered as written on the Medication Information Form and must be consistent with the pharmacy or manufacturer label.

Olive Branch Academy will not administer medication on an “as needed” basis or based on verbal instructions. A completed Medication Authorization Form must be on file for a child to receive any medication.

Medication Storage

All medications are stored securely in either a locked container or refrigerator, out of reach of children at all times.

Attendance & Illness Policy

Parents/guardians are responsible for normal tuition for any day a child is absent due to illness.

We ask that families always call or email to report absences. If a child does not arrive at their scheduled time and no communication has been received, the center will assume the child will not be attending that day. Staffing decisions may be made based on expected attendance; therefore, if a child arrives late without notice, care may not be available.

Communicable Disease Reporting

Parents/guardians are required to notify the center of any contagious illness. Olive Branch Academy is required to report certain communicable illnesses to the Van Buren County Health Department in accordance with state regulations. Olive Branch Academy informs parents via remind of any communicable diseases.

13. VACATION TIME

Vacation benefits do not apply to children enrolled only during summer or to families participating in the Teacher Discount Program.

Each child becomes eligible for vacation time after completing one (1) full year of continuous enrollment at Olive Branch Academy. Vacation time may be used for family vacations, emergencies, illness, or other absences when the child is not in attendance.

General Vacation Policy

- Vacation time may only be used when the child is fully absent from care.

- Vacation time cannot be applied toward the final two (2) weeks of enrollment.
- Vacation time cannot be used for partial attendance days.
- Vacation time does not roll over and must be used within the eligible period.

The vacation year is based on a fiscal year (example: March–March), not a calendar year. Each child must complete one full year at OBA before vacation time becomes available.

Vacation Allowance

- Full-time children (defined as attending five (5) days per week) receive one (1) full week (5 days) of vacation time.
- Part-time children receive their regularly scheduled weekly attendance days as vacation time.

Requesting Vacation Time

A Vacation Request Form must be completed and submitted any time a child will be absent using vacation time. Forms are available in the foyer in the designated hanging basket.

School-Age Program (Year-Round Enrollment)

School-age children enrolled in the year-round program receive one (1) vacation week per school year, provided they have met continuous enrollment requirements.

- During the school year, vacation must be used in full-week increments (no daily use).
- During the summer program, vacation time may be used on a daily basis, as tuition is billed daily.
- Vacation Time Cannot Be Split: Vacation time cannot be divided between summer care and school-year care because the tuition rates and billing structures are different. Parents must choose to use their vacation time either during the summer program or during the school year.

School-Age Summer-Only Enrollment

Children enrolled only in the summer program may use one (1) week of vacation time during the summer session while still being charged the minimum two (2) day weekly tuition requirement.

To qualify, the child must be absent for the entire scheduled week in order to use vacation time.

14. INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM) PLAN

Olive Branch Academy follows an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan in accordance with Michigan Child Care Licensing Rules to ensure a safe, healthy environment for children and staff. The center is routinely inspected and pest management treatments are used only when necessary.

Scheduled Treatments

When pest control services are scheduled, parents/guardians will be notified in advance via email and/or the Remind app. Scheduled treatment information will be provided in September, or as otherwise required based on service scheduling.

Unscheduled / Emergency Treatments

If an unscheduled pest control treatment is necessary, parents/guardians will be notified at least 48 hours in advance, except in emergency situations where treatment is required to protect health and safety.

Notification will be provided by:

- Posting written notice on all main entry doors
- Email and/or Remind app communication

Required Notification Information

All pest control notifications will include:

- The targeted pest or reason for treatment
- The product(s) being used, including a Safety Data Sheet (SDS)
- The approximate location of application
- Date and time of application
- Contact information for Olive Branch Academy
- A toll-free number for a nationally recognized pesticide information center, as required by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)

Compliance with Michigan Licensing

All pest control services are conducted in compliance with Michigan Child Care Licensing Rules (LARA) and applicable IPM standards. All treatments will be applied in a manner that prioritizes child safety, including minimizing exposure and ensuring treated areas are not accessible to children during application and required re-entry times.

15. DRESS / ITEMS TO BRING IN

Children are encouraged to wear comfortable play clothing and closed-toe tennis shoes. Daily activities include active and often messy play, and clothing should allow children to participate freely without concern for getting dirty or damaged.

Please ensure that your child's name is clearly labeled on all outerwear, clothing, and personal belongings to help ensure items are returned properly.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an important part of a child's growth and development. It supports physical activity, social interaction, and healthy exploration of the environment.

Children will go outside daily, even if only for a short period of time, unless weather conditions are considered severe or unsafe.

If a child is well enough to attend Olive Branch Academy, they will be expected to participate in outdoor activities with their group. Outdoor time may also include walks or stroller rides for younger children.

Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the current weather conditions and season (including coats, hats, boots, etc. when needed). If appropriate outdoor clothing is not provided, the child will still participate in outdoor time when conditions allow.

16. MEALS

Olive Branch Academy (OBA) provides breakfast, two snacks (AM and PM), and cow's milk and/or soy milk as part of the daily food program.

Children are served a nutritious breakfast between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., which includes cow's milk.

Children receive:

- One (1) AM snack (9:30am)
- One (1) PM snack (2:30pm)
- Filter Water throughout the day as needed

Lunch is served daily between 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. and includes cow's milk provided by OBA.

Parents/guardians must:

- Provide a nutritionally balanced lunch daily

Weekly Menu: Breakfast and Snacks

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
BREAKFAST	*Pancakes Milk Fruit	Cereal Milk Fruit	*Pancakes Milk Fruit	Cereal Milk Fruit	Cereal Milk Fruit
AM SNACK	Veggie Straws	*Cheez-its	Graham Crackers	*Goldfish	Animal Crackers
PM SNACK	Cheerios Mix	*Cheese Sticks & Crackers	*Nutri-grain Bars	Applesauce	Banana/Pretzels

Menus are posted in the classrooms, in the foyer on the parent board, and on the OBA website.

All meals provided through OBA follow guidelines established by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Parent-Provided Lunches

Parents are responsible for providing lunch daily. Lunches may be heated if needed.

- Meals that require heating should be placed in the designated “Hot Lunch” bin
- Cold lunches should be placed on the child’s assigned hook
- OBA does not prepare individual food items (example: macaroni cups must be pre-prepared by the parent)

We are a peanut / Tree Nut Free Facility Olive Branch Academy is a peanut and tree nut-free facility. For the safety of all children, any food brought into the Center that contains peanuts or tree nuts cannot be served to your child. If a meal replacement is needed because a child’s food contains peanuts or tree nuts, Olive Branch Academy will provide a meal replacement for an additional $10.00 fee per child. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that all food brought from home complies with OBA’s peanut and tree nut-free policy.

If a child forgets their lunch, OBA will provide a replacement meal for an additional fee of **$10.00 per meal, per child, added to the weekly tuition.**

School-Age Meals

Parents are responsible for providing breakfast and lunch for school-age children during both the school year and summer program. Meals must be packed in a lunchbox with an ice pack.

If a child forgets their meal, OBA will provide breakfast and/or lunch for an additional fee of **$10.00 per meal, per child, added to weekly tuition.**

OBA will provide snacks as follows:

- School year: One (1) afternoon snack (4:20 pm)
- Summer program / no-school days: Two (2) snacks (9:30 AM and 2:30 PM)

Dietary Restrictions / Allergies

Children with dietary restrictions or food allergies must bring their own meals and snacks daily (breakfast, lunch, and snacks as applicable).

Parents are responsible for providing a nutritionally balanced meal, which should include a protein, fruit, and vegetable, stored in a lunchbox with an ice pack.

If OBA must provide a meal due to failure to provide food, a fee of $10.00 per meal will be charged and added to weekly tuition.

All allergies must be documented in writing on the Child Information Card (CIC).

If a child requires an alternative milk option, soy milk is available upon request. Please complete an allergy/dietary form with the Director.

Mealtime Expectations

Mealtimes provide opportunities for social interaction and communication between staff and children.

At Olive Branch Academy, classrooms may offer a brief, optional prayer before meals as a transition practice. Participation is voluntary, and children may choose to participate, observe, or remain silent according to family preference.

Children are encouraged to try new foods but are never forced to eat. A "no thank you bite" or small taste may be encouraged. If ongoing eating concerns arise, the Director, Lead Teacher, and family will work together to develop a plan.

Staff supervision during meals is required; therefore, we ask that parents respect teachers' attention to classroom supervision during this time.

Infant Formula Policy

If an infant does not have sufficient formula provided for the day, OBA will supply ready-to-use formula bottles as needed.

A fee of $5.00 per bottle will be charged if OBA formula is used and added to weekly tuition.

17. ITEMS TO BRING / PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All items must be brought to and kept at Olive Branch Academy as applicable. Please label all items clearly with your child's first and last name. If items are not labeled, staff will label them as needed, including pacifiers.

Items should be updated as needed for seasonal changes.

Olive Branch Academy does not use pull-ups for potty training. When your child begins showing readiness for potty training, please request a Potty Training Packet for guidance and expectations.

Children's bedding will be sent home weekly for laundering and should be returned clean each week.

- Pack n Play sheet
- Two (2) complete changes of clothing, including socks
- Diapers & wipes
- Any diaper cream or ointment to be applied (must be provided by parent/guardian)
- Baby formula in bottles (fully prepared, labeled with child's full name and date, and brought fresh daily)
- Baby food as needed

ONE-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM – Doodlebugs / Whirligigs

- Two (2) complete changes of clothing, including socks
- Toddler crib sheet and blanket for naptime
- Diapers & wipes
- Any diaper cream or ointment to be applied (must be provided by parent/guardian)
- Seasonal clothing as needed (hat, coat, snow pants, mittens, boots, etc.)

TWO-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM – Jitterbugs / Ladybugs

- Two (2) complete changes of clothing, including underwear and socks, placed in a labeled Ziploc bag
- Toddler sheet and blanket for naptime
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Diapers & wipes (if needed)
- Any diaper cream or ointment to be applied (must be provided by parent/guardian)
- Seasonal clothing as needed (hat, coat, snow pants, mittens, boots, etc.)
- Additional clothing or supplies may be required for children in the potty training stage

THREE-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM – Caterpillars / Bumblebees & FOUR-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM – Butterflies

- One (1) complete change of clothing, including underwear and socks
- Toddler sheet and blanket for quiet/rest time
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Seasonal clothing as needed (hat, coat, snow pants, mittens, boots, etc.)

18. TOYS / PERSONAL ITEMS FROM HOME

The only time toys or personal items from home are permitted at Olive Branch Academy is during designated “share days” in the classroom.

We understand it may be difficult for children to leave personal items at home; however, this policy is in place to protect children’s belongings from being lost, damaged, or shared inappropriately. This includes all personal electronic devices.

19. Potty Training Policy

At Olive Branch Academy (OBA), we believe potty training is an important developmental milestone that is best achieved through consistency, encouragement, and partnership between families and teachers. Our staff will support children during this process when they show readiness and families are actively participating in potty training at home.

Potty Training Packet Requirement

Before beginning potty training at OBA, families must first receive and review the Potty Training Packet provided by the center. The packet includes readiness indicators, expectations, and helpful tips for both home and school.

Once families have reviewed the packet, they should speak with the Director to ask any questions and determine if their child is ready to begin potty training. A start date will then be agreed upon between the family and the center to ensure consistency and success for the child.

Readiness for Potty Training **Before beginning potty training at OBA, children should demonstrate signs of readiness, including:**

- Showing interest in using the toilet and increased independence
- Following simple one-step directions
- Demonstrating no fear of the toilet
- Understanding and using words related to toileting
- Recognizing the urge to use the bathroom
- Being able to sit on the toilet long enough to try using it
- Staying dry for at least two hours
- Pulling pants up and down independently

Potty Training Expectations

The goal of potty training at OBA is for children to learn to use the bathroom independently. This includes recognizing the need to use the toilet, pulling clothing up and down, using the toilet, and washing hands afterward.

Accidents are a normal part of the learning process. Our staff will respond with patience, encouragement, and positive reinforcement.

If a child has three accidents in one day for two days within the same week, staff may determine the child is not yet ready. Potty training may be paused and resumed at a later time when the child shows additional readiness.

Clothing and Supplies

Families must provide the following items when potty training begins:

- Underwear (pull-ups are only permitted during nap time)
- 3–5 waterproof covers to wear over underwear
- 3–5 extra pairs of underwear to remain at the center
- At least 3 extra pairs of pants

Children should be dressed in clothing that can be easily removed. Clothing such as onesies, overalls, or other complicated outfits should be avoided.

Children who are wearing diapers or pull-ups during the day will not participate in potty training at the center.

Encouragement and Incentives

OBA uses positive encouragement to support children during potty training. Instead of edible rewards, children may receive stickers to place on a potty training chart. When a child completes their chart, they will receive a small celebration reward, such as a balloon, to recognize their accomplishment.

Family Partnership

Successful potty training requires consistency between home and school. Families are encouraged to:

- Practice potty routines at home
- Provide positive encouragement
- Maintain open communication with teachers

Program Discretion

The Director and teaching staff reserve the right to pause or delay potty training if a child does not demonstrate readiness or if the process becomes disruptive to classroom routines, sanitation practices, or the child's well-being. Potty training may resume when the child demonstrates readiness to continue.

20. BEHAVIOR, GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE

Olive Branch Academy uses positive guidance strategies to support children in developing self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation.

Positive verbal reinforcement is used to encourage appropriate behavior. This helps children develop confidence in their choices and also serves as a model for peers to promote positive behavior throughout the classroom.

Children are encouraged to pause and reflect on their behavior in order to build self-regulation and problem-solving skills.

Guidance Philosophy – The Five R's

Our staff follows the "Five R's" approach:

- **Relax** – Take a calm, deep breath and approach the situation with patience and composure
- **Reflect** – Listen to the child and acknowledge their feelings
- **Reason** – Help the child problem-solve and understand expectations
- **React** – Offer appropriate alternatives and support positive choices
- **Redirect** – Guide the child toward appropriate behavior through positive engagement and redirection

Age-Appropriate Guidance

Infants through age 3:

- Redirection only

Ages 3 through 12:

- Redirection
- Verbal warning
- Thinking/calming area

The thinking/calming area is a designated space where children may sit away from the group to regain control, reflect on their behavior, and return when they are ready. Children are encouraged to independently rejoin the group after demonstrating readiness for appropriate behavior.

Time in the calming area will not exceed **one (1) minute per year of age**.

Time spent in this area is not considered punishment, but rather a supportive tool to help children regain self-control and return to the group successfully.

Behavior Concerns & Communication

If behavior concerns continue, parents/guardians will be asked to attend a conference with staff to develop a plan to support the child's success in the program.

Suspension & Dismissal Policy

Olive Branch Academy reserves the right to:

- Suspend a child from the program for up to **two (2) weeks** due to disruptive, disrespectful, or unsafe behavior
- Require withdrawal from the program if behavior significantly impacts the safety or operation of the classroom

If a child is suspended, **vacation time may not be used**, and full tuition remains due during the suspension period.

If a child's behavior becomes unsafe or severely disruptive to the classroom environment, the Program Director and/or Administrator may require the child to be picked up immediately for the safety and well-being of all children and staff.

Olive Branch Academy reserves the right to **withdraw a child from the program without notice** if the program environment is fundamentally disrupted or cannot safely continue.

Family & Staff Communication

All concerns must be communicated respectfully. Families are expected to use courteous language and tone when speaking with staff regarding behavior concerns or program issues.

Prohibited Discipline Practices

In accordance with **Michigan Child Care Licensing Rules (LARA)**, the following forms of punishment or discipline are strictly prohibited at Olive Branch Academy:

a. Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or any other form of corporal punishment.
b. Placing any substances in a child's mouth, including but not limited to soap, hot sauce, or vinegar.
c. Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying.
d. Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, including humiliation, shaming, threatening, or degrading a child.
e. Withholding or depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary bathroom/toileting use.
f. Excluding a child from outdoor play or gross motor activities as a form of punishment.
g. Excluding a child from daily learning experiences as a form of discipline.
h. Confining a child in an enclosed space such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar area.
i. Time-out may not be used for children under 3 years of age.

Appropriate Discipline Practices

Non-severe, developmentally appropriate discipline or restraint may be used only when reasonably necessary, based on a child's developmental level, to:

- Prevent the child from harming themselves
- Prevent the child from harming others
- Prevent damage to property

All discipline practices must exclude any methods listed in the prohibited section above and must always prioritize the safety, dignity, and emotional well-being of the child.

DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIREMENT

Olive Branch Academy maintains a written discipline policy outlining age-appropriate, non-severe guidance strategies. This policy is:

- Provided to all staff members
- Made available to parents/guardians
- Implemented consistently across all classrooms

21. BUTTERFLIES PROGRAM (4's PRE-K CLASSROOM)

The Butterflies Program is our 4-year-old Pre-K classroom designed to prepare children for Kindergarten readiness.

Field Trips

The Butterflies Program will participate in scheduled field trips throughout the year. A **field trip permission form** and any applicable fees will be sent home in advance and must be completed and returned to the main office before a child is permitted to attend any off-site activities.

Kindergarten Readiness & School Collaboration

Olive Branch Academy works closely with **Mattawan Consolidated Schools** to support Kindergarten readiness and a smooth transition into elementary school.

By signing the Written Information Packet, parents/guardians grant permission for Olive Branch Academy to share a child's preschool evaluation information with teachers and/or administration at Mattawan Consolidated Schools for **educational purposes only**. This information is shared solely to support the child's academic development and transition to Kindergarten.

22. FIREFLIES PROGRAM (SCHOOL-AGE – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)

The Fireflies Program is designed for school-age children and includes both school-year and summer care options.

Field Trips & Transportation

The Fireflies Program may participate in field trips throughout the year. Families may be asked to contribute additional funds to help support **transportation costs and field trip expenses**. Notices and permission forms will be provided in advance. All transportation is provided through the buses and drivers of Mattawan Consolidated Schools and Paw Paw Public Schools.

Learning Materials Fee

To support continued learning during summer and school-age programming, a **$20 per child learning materials fee** is required. This fee includes items such as:

- Workbooks
- Journals
- Classroom books
- Program bag or materials

This fee is used to support enrichment activities and maintain academic readiness during school-age programming.

Scheduling & Enrollment Requirements

School-age children must be scheduled for care in advance for:

- Half days
- Full days (no school days)
- AM/PM care
- Summer care

A sign-up sheet will be posted in advance on the classroom door. Enrollment is **limited and based on a first-come, first-served basis**, with a firm sign-up deadline.

If a child is scheduled to attend but does not attend, **tuition and/or applicable fees will still be charged regardless of attendance**.

Unscheduled Attendance Fee

If a child arrives on a scheduled closure day or attends without prior sign-up, a **$15.00 fee per occurrence** will be applied.

If space is not available, parents/guardians will be contacted and required to pick up the child promptly.

School-Year & Summer Placement

OBA is unable to guarantee placement for only the school year or only the summer program.

To reserve a child's spot year-round, families may pay a **$50 weekly holding fee** to maintain enrollment during non-attendance periods, unless the family qualifies for the Teacher Discount Program.

Without a paid holding arrangement or qualifying program status, placement cannot be guaranteed.

Summer Camp Parent & Child Acknowledgment Policy

All families participating in Olive Branch Academy Summer Camp are required to sign a **Summer Camp Parent and Child Acknowledgment Form** each year prior to participation.

This acknowledgment confirms that parents/guardians and children understand and agree to follow all summer camp policies, procedures, and behavior expectations outlined by the program.

Behavior Expectations

Summer Camp is designed to be a safe, fun, and structured environment. All children are expected to:

- Follow staff directions and classroom rules
- Show respect toward peers and staff
- Use appropriate language and behavior
- Participate safely in group activities

Behavioral Concerns and Consequences

If a child consistently demonstrates unsafe, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior, the following steps may be taken:

- Verbal redirection and staff support
- Parent communication and behavior planning
- Formal behavior documentation and intervention

If behavioral concerns continue and are not improving, **disenrollment from the Summer Camp program may occur** to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and staff.

Annual Requirement

The Summer Camp Acknowledgment Form must be signed **each year** prior to a child's participation. Attendance in the program indicates agreement with all summer camp policies and expectations.

23. CHILD DEVELOPMENT & CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS

Milestones & Assessments

At various times throughout the year, Olive Branch Academy will conduct developmental milestone checks and classroom assessments for enrolled children.

These tools are used to help identify potential developmental delays early and to support each child's growth and readiness.

If concerns or notable findings arise, the Program Director and/or Owner will communicate results and next steps with parents/guardians.

Special Needs

Olive Branch Academy serves a diverse group of children, including those with special needs.

Prior to enrollment, the Program Director and/or Owner will meet with the parent/guardian to discuss the child's needs. Through open communication and review of relevant information, the center will determine whether Olive Branch Academy is an appropriate placement without fundamentally altering the program structure.

Confidentiality Of Records

Children's records are confidential and will only be accessible to:

- The child's classroom teachers
- The Program Director
- The Administrator
- Authorized representatives of the licensing agency
- The child's parent or legal guardian

No information will be released to unauthorized individuals without proper consent, except as required by law.

24. OUTDOOR TIME

Outdoor play is an important part of a child's growth and development. It supports physical health, social development, and exploration of the environment.

Children will go outside daily, even if only for a short period of time, unless weather conditions are considered unsafe or severe.

Any child who is well enough to attend Olive Branch Academy will be expected to participate in outdoor activities. Outdoor time may also include walks or stroller rides for younger children.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring children are dressed appropriately for current weather conditions, including seasonal gear such as coats, hats, boots, mittens, and snow gear when applicable.

If appropriate outdoor clothing is not provided, the child will still participate in outdoor time when conditions allow.

Sunscreen and Bug Repellent Policy

To protect children from sun exposure and insects during outdoor play, Olive Branch Academy requires that all sunscreen and bug repellent be **provided by each child's parent or guardian**.

A **Sunscreen and Bug Repellent Permission Sign-Up Sheet** is available in each classroom. Parents or guardians must sign this form to authorize staff to apply sunscreen and/or bug repellent to their child. If the permission form is **not signed**, staff will **not apply sunscreen or bug repellent** to the child.

All sunscreen and bug repellent must meet the following requirements:

- Provided by the child's **parent or guardian**
- Clearly labeled with the child's **first and last name**
- **Within the expiration date**
- **Replaced annually** or sooner if it becomes expired or empty

Staff are **not permitted to apply expired sunscreen or bug repellent**. If a product becomes expired, families will be asked to provide a replacement.

When permission is provided, sunscreen may be applied **prior to outdoor play and reapplied as needed**, especially during extended outdoor time.

25. STAFF SCREENING POLICY

Michigan Child Care Licensing

Prior to having contact with children in care, all staff members must have documentation verifying they are not listed on the **Michigan Central Registry for substantiated abuse or neglect**, in accordance with Act No. 238 of the Public Acts of 1975, as amended (MCL 722.621–722.636).

Pre-Employment Screening Requirements

All team members must successfully complete the following prior to employment and participation in team orientation:

1. Fingerprinting / Criminal Background Check (CCBC)
2. Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry Clearance
3. Medical Clearance
4. Interview process, including reference checks

Volunteer Requirements

In accordance with state licensing rules, any volunteer who may have unsupervised contact with children must complete the same screening requirements listed above.

However, **Olive Branch Academy policy strictly prohibits volunteers from being left alone with children at any time.**

A supervised volunteer must have a completed Public Sex Offender Registry (PSOR) check and a signed Child Abuse and Neglect Statement on file. Supervised volunteers shall remain within the sight and sound of a staff member who has successfully completed the required comprehensive background check at all times and may not be left alone with children.

Any volunteer will be prohibited from having contact with children if they are on the PSOR.

Staff Training Policy

All employees and unsupervised volunteers must establish an active MIRegistry account and complete all required health and safety training within their first 90 days of employment or volunteer service. All employees are required to participate in a program orientation upon hire. All new employees and unsupervised volunteers shall complete an orientation before assuming responsibility for children. Orientation will include the center's policies and procedures, staff responsibilities, child supervision requirements, health and safety practices, emergency procedures, child abuse and neglect reporting requirements, licensing regulations, and all other training required by Michigan Child Care Licensing Rules. Documentation of orientation will be maintained in each employee's personnel file.

Employees must complete a minimum of 16 hours of professional development annually. In addition, all staff must receive training on emergency procedures at least twice per year. Ongoing training is provided throughout the year through the practice of fire drills, tornado drills, and lockdown drills.

Required health and safety training includes, but is not limited to:

- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma, and Child Maltreatment
- Recognition and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
- CPR, First Aid, and Bloodborne Pathogens
- Safe Sleep Practices (for programs serving infants and toddlers)

All team members are required to attend scheduled staff meetings and training sessions. If a staff member is unable to attend a required training, they must complete an approved equivalent training on the same topic at an alternate date, time, or location.

Required Training Topics Include:

- CPR and First Aid Certification
- Infant and Toddler Development (if applicable)
- Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention
- Safe Sleep Practices
- Bloodborne Pathogen Training

- Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedures
- Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- Behavior Guidance and Discipline Policy
- Health Care and Safety Procedures, including:
    - Medication administration
    - Cleaning and sanitizing procedures
    - Handling ill children
    - Food handling
    - Diapering and handwashing procedures

26. AVAILABILITY OF LICENSING NOTEBOOK

Olive Branch Academy maintains a **Licensing Notebook** containing:

- All licensing inspection reports
- Special investigation reports
- Corrective action plans (if applicable)

This notebook is available for parent/guardian review during **regular business hours** and is located in the **foyer next to the parent information board**.

In addition, licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past five (5) years are available online at:
www.michigan.gov/michildcare

27. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

This handbook has been created to answer many common questions regarding policies and procedures at Olive Branch Academy. If you have additional questions, please contact the Director at (269) 668-3300.

For questions related specifically to scheduling or billing, please email:
olivebranchacademy1@gmail.com

Parent Communication Methods

Parents are kept informed of classroom activities and center updates through the following methods:

- Remind App (classroom-specific groups)
- Parent News Board (located in the lobby)
- Daily “Today Boards” in classrooms
- Classroom bulletin boards
- Engagement App (Snugglebug, Doodlebug, and Whirligig programs)
- Monthly program calendars
- Center website: www.olivebranchacademy.net

Remind App Classroom Codes

Please join your child's classroom Remind group using the code or text instructions below:

- Snugglebug: text @snuggbug to 81010
- Cuddlebug: text @cuddbug to 81010
- Doodlebug: text @doobug to 81010
- Whirligig: text @whirli1 to 81010
- Jitterbug: text @jitterbug2 to 81010
- Ladybug: text @ladybug2-5 to 81010
- Caterpillar: text @3caterpill to 81010
- Bumblebee: text @bbees2-5 to 81010
- Butterfly: text @butterfour to 81010
- Fireflies: text @firefly2-5 to 81010

Parent Conferences

Parents may request a conference at any time if there is a concern or need for discussion regarding their child's care, development, or classroom experience.

Communication Expectations

To ensure effective communication and staff focus on children's supervision:

- Parents are asked not to text classroom teachers directly
- Teachers are not permitted to use personal phones during classroom hours (Lead Teachers may use phones for emergency purposes only)
- All communication, questions, concerns, or messages should be directed to the center phone or administrative staff

For assistance, please call:

Olive Branch Academy – (269) 668-3300

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS (CONTINUED)

Parents are encouraged to visit the center at any time. However, due to scheduled activities and classroom routines, advance notice is appreciated when possible.

If teachers are engaged with children or classroom activities, they may not be immediately available for conversation. We appreciate your understanding that the care and supervision of children remains the highest priority during instructional time.

Response Time & Communication Expectations

The primary responsibility of staff is the supervision and care of children in our program. As a result, responses to phone calls, emails, and messages will be handled as promptly as possible outside of direct supervision times.

The Program Director and/or administrative staff will respond to messages within **48 business hours**.

During drop-off and pick-up times, administrative staff may not always be available in person. Families are encouraged to send questions or concerns via email to ensure a timely response.

Office Hours & Email Communication

Administrative staff operate during regular business hours only. Please note:

- Emails and messages are not monitored after **5:30 p.m. Monday–Friday**
- Emails are not monitored on **weekends or holidays**
- Communication received outside of business hours will be responded to on the next business day

28. CHILD ABUSE:

The Michigan Child Protection Law requires certain people to report their suspicions of child abuse or neglect to Centralized Intake (CI) Unit at the Department of Human Services. These people are mandated reporters and have established relationships with children based on their profession. Mandated reporters are an essential parent of the child protection system since they have an enhanced capacity, through their expertise and direct contact with children, to identify suspected child abuse and neglect. Complaints made by mandated reporters are confirmed at nearly double the rate of those made by non-mandated reporters. Regulated child care providers are among those listed as mandated reporters.

When a mandated reporter suspects child abuse or neglect, he or she is required to make an immediate verbal report to CI and follow with a written report within 72 hours. Telling a supervisor, manager, counselor, or another employee does not fulfill the legal reporting requirement. However, the reporter should notify the organization administrator of the report.

The verbal report can be completed by calling toll free (855) 444-3911. The individual who had contact with the child must complete the call and provide as much detail as possible.

The law also requires that a mandated reporter follow up with a written report by using the DHS-3200 Form, which can be found at
www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/DHS-3200 224934 7.pdf

The Child Protection Law protects the identity of the person who makes the complaint unless the individual waives that right or the court orders the name to be released. Likewise, a person making a good faith report is protected from civil and criminal prosecution and cannot be penalized for making the report or cooperating with a CPS investigation.

CHILD ABUSE (Continued):

Before Team Members or volunteers have contact with children while in our care, the volunteer shall provide the center with documentation from the Family Independence Agency that he or she has not been placed on the central registry for substantial abuse or neglect, as defined in Act No. 238, Public Acts of 1975, as amended, being 722.621 to 722.636, of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

CHILD ABUSE SIGNATURE PAGE:

We are required by law to report any circumstance where we "have reasonable cause to believe" that a child is being abused or neglected to Michigan's Centralized Intake Unit (CI) or the police. Any suspicious behavior, bruises, or injuries will be reported for the protection of the children. It is not our responsibility to investigate, but to report. Again this is a law that we must and we will obey.

Before staff or volunteers may have contact with children while in care of a child care center, the volunteer shall provide the center with documentation from the Family Independence Agency that he or she has not been placed on the central registry for substantial abuse or neglect, as defined in Act No. 238, Public Acts of 1975, as amended, being 722.621 to 722.636, of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

I, _____, have read and understand the policies.

I understand that Kiddie U Academy follows the State of Michigan policy on child abuse and neglect. The policy states that

A) Staff shall notify and submit approved credentials to the Department within 30 days of hiring a new program director.

B) Develop and implement a written screening policy for all staff and volunteers, including parents, who have contact with children.

C) Have a written statement signed and dated by staff at the time of hiring indicating all of the following information:

1. The individual is aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law.
2. The individual has been informed of the center's policies on child abuse and neglect.
3. The individual knows that caregivers are mandated by law to report abuse and neglect.

29. Daily Schedules:

The Snugglebug and Cuddlebug Program is loved, fed and changed as needed.
The below schedule is a typical day for the Doodlebug, Whirligig, Jitterbug and Ladybug Programs:

ARRIVAL	**6:30 – 7:30**
BREAKFAST	**7:30 – 8:00**
MUSIC, STORIES, FINGERPLAYS	**8:00 – 9:00**
AM SNACK	**9:30**
LEARNING FUN	**10:00 – 10:45** **(Language Development, Art, Sensory, Large and small motor skills)**
OUTSIDE	**10:45 – 11:20**
LUNCH	**11:30**
NAP	**12:30 – 2:30**
PM SNACK	**3:00**
FREE PLAY/EXPLORATION	**3:30 – 5:30**

The below schedule is a typical day for the Caterpillar and Butterfly Program.

ARRIVAL	**6:30 – 7:30**
BREAKFAST	**7:30 – 8:00**
BLOCKS, COLORING, PUZZLES	**8:00 – 8:30**
BIG RUG AND LARGE GROUP	**8:30 – 9:30**
LEARNING CENTERS	**9:30 – 11:00**
OUTSIDE	**11:00 – 12:00**
LUNCH	**12:00 - 12:30**

Daily Schedules (Continued):

QUIET TIME	**12:30 – 2:30***
STORY TIME	**2:30 – 3:00**
PM SNACK	**3:00 – 3:30**
FREE PLAY/EXPLORATION	**3:30 – 5:30**

Fireflies Daily Schedule:

Before school schedule:
6:30-7:30 arrival/free choice
7:30-8:00 Breakfast
8-8:10 clean-up/gather items for bus
8:10-8:20 Bus stop
After school schedule:
4:10-4:30 bus arrival, hand washing, snack
4:30-5:15 outside
5:15-6:00 free choice

Summer Schedule
6:30-8:00 Arrival/Handwashing
8:00-8:45 Free Play
8:45-9:00 Sunscreen/Handwashing
Snack Outside (pick the easiest snack to eat outside)
9:00-10:00 Outside
10:00-11:30 Learning Centers
11:30-12 Lunch A
12:00-12:30 Lunch B
*The group that is not eating will do puzzles and game
1:00-1:15 Reading Books
1:15-1:30 Journaling
1:30-1:45 Workbooks
*During this students will be working with assigned book buddies
1:45-2:00 Sunscreen
2:00-3:00 Outside
3:00-3:30 Handwashing/Snack
3:30-4:30 Free Play
4:30-5:00 Group Game
5:00-5:30 Departure

30. Tuition Fee Schedule

Children in the Center are observed on an individual basis and are placed in a program that best fits their needs. Therefore, tuition is set per program, not your child's age. Our registration fee is $55.00 for the first child and $50.00 for each additional child. Registration is a non-refundable fee and is also an annual fee that will be billed in the second week of September. Regular tuition is required for **all unforeseen or unexpected center closures**. There are no tuition refunds or credits for illness, vacations, family emergencies, unforeseen closures, or snow days.

Age *Breakfast, Snacks Provided*	**Program name**	**Daily tuition rate** **(minimum of 2 days)**
6 weeks - 3-year-old	Snugglebug, Cuddlebug, Doodlebug, Whirligig , Jitterbug, Ladybug	$66
3-year-olds - 4-year-olds	Bumblebee & Caterpillars	$58.50
4-year-olds - 5-year-olds	Butterflies	$56.50
School-age children *Only Snacks Provided*		**Weekly/ Daily Rate**
Both Before & after school weekly	Firefly	$96 Weekly
Before **OR** after school weekly	Firefly	$66 Weekly
Additional fees- ½ day, school closings (including holiday breaks/spring break) & snow days.	Firefly	$35 Daily additional fee
Summer program (Daily fee with a 2-day minimum).	Firefly	$50 Daily
Summer Field Trip fee Billed the 1st week of the summer program (one-time payment for summer field trips).	Firefly	$100 per child help cover summers field trips/transportation

Tuition schedule will be updated annually at the beginning of September.

31. Procare Information

Dear Olive Branch Academy Families,

We are pleased to offer MyProcare, a free online portal for you to access account information. MyProcare is safe, secure and created with your convenience in mind.

Log in today!

1. Go to MyProcare.com.

2. Enter your email address (the email you have on file with Olive Branch Academy) and choose Go.

3. Enter the confirmation code sent to your email, choose a password, and press Go.

4. Then you may:
    a. View your child's schedule, time card, immunizations and more.

Our tax ID number: 85-3563677

If you have not provided an email or have a new email, please send an email to Olivebranchacademy1@gamil.com to provide it.

Thank you!

32. PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook and agree to comply with all policies.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____