

# A Parent's Guide To

*· Joyful Education ·*



Funshine Children's Center

*· Since 1983 ·*

3535 West 96th Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46268  
Phone: (317) 872-7755  
Fax: (317)872-6511

Funshineforkids@sbcglobal.net  
www.funshineforkids.com

Bob & Sandy Barnes  
Owners

Melissa Lawson, Director  
Sheri Williamson, Asst. Director

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*Funshine Children's Center Parent Handbook*

Dear Parents,

On behalf of our staff, I'd like to WELCOME you to Funshine Children's Center! We are excited to be part of your extended family. Your family has made a valuable decision to provide your child with a quality educational program in a safe and nurturing environment.

Funshine Children's Center is a privately owned school which was founded in 1983 to meet the need for a quality educational program for children. We are an Indiana State Licensed Preschool (FSSA) and a Level 3 in Paths to QUALITY™, Indiana's voluntary quality rating and improvement system.

In order to reach Level 3 we have committed to providing a quality program for your child by planning activities that lead to school readiness, additional staff training and to encourage family involvement.

Our dedicated staff is committed to each child and their family. We are confident your family will create lifelong memories as your child engages in age-appropriate activities in a safe and fun learning environment.

The information included in this handbook will provide you with our school's policies and procedures. Should you have any questions after reviewing our Parent Handbook, please don't hesitate to see a member of our staff.

Welcome to our Funshine Family!

Sincerely,

Melissa Lawson  
Director

## **Hours of Operation & Holidays**

Funshine Children's Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. We are CLOSED six holidays a year: Memorial Day, July 4th, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day and Labor Day.

In the event of a weather emergency Funshine will close if the City of Indianapolis declares a travel emergency (code red). If the center closes for any other emergency, every effort will be made to contact families via phone call. Our voicemail will be updated as soon as a decision is made to close the center.

## **Philosophy**

At Funshine Children's Center our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment in which children develop self-confidence and discover the joy of learning and of friendships. We strive to build partnerships between our families and staff as well as positive partnerships within our community.

## **Funshine Programs**

Funshine Children's Center offers a wide variety of educational opportunities for young children ages 6 weeks through Pre-Kindergarten. Our programs include the following:

### **Infant Care/Waddlers (6wks.-1yr.):**

This program is designed for children 6 weeks -1year old. Infants are encouraged to develop at their own pace. Teachers sing songs and read stories to encourage language acquisition. Children participate in daily activities to enhance their motor skills, which include passing balls and playing a variety of games. In addition, teachers play games that develop each infant's cognitive skill development such as "peek-a-boo" and "where is the rattle?" (object permanence), puzzles, shapes, and sized-ring stacking (problem solving and one to one correspondence), and stacking and linking blocks (cause and effect). Most importantly, our teachers provide children with individualized attention and spend time cuddling and talking to each infant to instill trust and to provide comfort. Parents are always welcome to visit their infant in the classroom when possible throughout the day.

### **Jr. Toddler Care (12 mo – 18mo):**

This program is designed for children ages 12 months to 18 months. The Jr. Toddler classroom encourages children to explore the world around them through participating in developmentally appropriate activities. Children will learn many independent skills such as eating at the table with a spoon, sleeping on a cot, and following a nap schedule. Our Jr. Toddlers also begin to participate in circle time activities reading books, learning songs, and developing shape and color recognition.

**Toddler Care (18 mo-2 yrs.):**

This program is designed for children 18 mo. to 2 years old. The toddler classroom is organized to encourage children to interact with one another. Age-appropriate hands-on activities are planned daily. Children will continue to learn to eat at the table with a spoon and to drink from a regular cup prior to transitioning to the next classroom. Bottles, jarred baby food and diaper bags are not permitted in this classroom. Our Sr. Toddlers will enjoy hands on sensory experiences such as "cooking" (exploring textures and mixing and measuring ingredients), scooping and pouring rice and sand, "writing" in whipped cream and pudding, and squishing play dough and finger paint. All of these activities are not only messy good fun, but also help to strengthen fine motor muscle development and early mathematic reasoning skills.

**Wee Care (2-3 yrs):**

This program is designed for children 2 to 3 years old. Children in this program participate in interactive lessons and daily social activities appropriate for their age. All children in this classroom will use "pull-ups," as our Wee Care staff will actively assist with potty training when a child indicates readiness. This program is planned to encourage children to interact with one another and to provide nurturing enhancement of their social skills. Pacifiers, bottles, sippy cups and diaper bags are not permitted in this classroom. Our two-year olds will have comprehension of shape and color recognition, as well as begin to understand that numbers and letters have meaning before transitioning to our Jr. Preschool Classroom.

**Jr. and Sr. Pre-School (3-4 yrs.):**

These classrooms are designed for children 3 to 4 years old. Children in each program continue their growth and development of tactile and gross motor skills. Some of the many skills developed in this program include letter recognition, spelling their first and last names, number recognition, enhancing problem solving skills, and fine motor skills such as cutting, gluing, and writing. Appropriate manners, safety, and refinement of social skills and independence is emphasized in this classroom. Children must be potty-trained prior to transitioning to the Pre-Kindergarten Program.

**Pre-Kindergarten (4-5 yrs.):**

This program is designed for children 4 to 5 years old. Children in this program will be continuing the development of their fine and gross motor skills in preparation for entering into Kindergarten. Positive social and emotional skills are nurtured along with many hands on science, math, language and art experiences. Children complete book reports, journal writing, and workbook assignments. A Graduation Ceremony is celebrated in May for children advancing to Kindergarten in the fall school year. Our goal when children graduate from our program is that they have not only the educational tools to succeed, but are also good citizens that can follow directions and be kind and respectful to others.

## **Specialty Classes**

We offer many specialty classes and enrichment programs in addition to our excellent academic and social and emotional experiences offered in the classroom:

**Spanish & Sign-Language:** Basic Spanish and Sign-Language is taught during circle time each day by the Lead Teacher.

**Music:** Early exposure to music not only develops rhythm skills in children, it also helps them build self-confidence, enhances complex reasoning, and focuses listening skills. Research also shows that when children are exposed to a variety of music at an early age they perform better academically and it has cognitive benefits in many areas of the brain. A highlighted feature at our center is our "Music and Movement" cart. This cart, which is shared in each classroom daily, holds a multitude of familiar and multi-cultural instruments, as well as dancing streamers and scarves, and a variety of musical CD's for children to explore.

### Music class:

Ms. Anna teaches music classes each Tuesday for each of our classrooms. It is the goal of our music program to provide children with early exposure to active, participatory musical experiences to help establish a foundation of expressive, receptive and creative music skills. The program incorporates a wide and varied repertoire of songs, fingerplays, and music activities that are age appropriate and highly engaging. Each year the children perform in a Christmas musical and a spring musical that offers parents the opportunity to see their children perform.

**Family Time Entertainment:** Family Time Entertainment brings several fun shows for the children throughout the year. They include shows such as: The Magic Science Show, Dr. Seuss Tribute, The Water Show, Holiday Shows and The What's that Sound Show. These experiences are not only fun, but can be educational to the children as well.

**Indy Parks:** The Indy Parks environmental education staff comes monthly to provide a variety of experiences and educational tools that help to build a curiosity of nature and the opportunity to explore their senses and gain knowledge about a variety of animals and insects. The Naturalists of IndyParks bring a variety of resources to help the children develop a love of nature and a desire to preserve our natural resources.

**Community Visitors:** Several times throughout the year community leaders come to Funshine to discuss important topics such as dental health, stranger safety, fire safety and Health and Nutrition.

**St. Jude Trike a Thon:** Funshine has participated in St. Jude's Trike a Thon for 10 consecutive years. Each May children learn valuable safety lessons about bicycle riding throughout a one week safety curriculum. At the end of the week children bring

their riding toys to school to celebrate the lessons they have learned and the fundraising success for St. Jude.

**Splash Day:** During the summer months, the children enjoy time outdoors participating in "splash day". Each classroom has a specified day of the week to use our outdoor splash area to develop gross motor skills and experience fun water activities with friends!

**Summer Garden:** Children at Funshine are able to participate in hands on gardening activities that help them to develop a love of nature, appreciation for wildlife and learn about healthy eating! At the end of the season children enjoy the fruits of their labor with a "harvest celebration".

**Bookmobile:** The love of reading and early literacy skills are developed at Funshine through several experiences. The children are able to pick out their own books to read throughout the week each Wednesday on the bookmobile. During the summer we participate in the summer reading program in which the children earn prizes to take home based on the number of books they read at school!

**Gymboree\*:** Gymboree offers two one day a week classes at Funshine. Children ages 1-2 may take the "Grow and Learn" class through Gymboree, while children ages 3-5 may participate in the sports program.

The Grow and Learn class Encourages development through play and learning with a seven-level program designed to support your child's growth at his or her own individual pace. From sensory stimulation to problem-solving games and storytelling, our classes use play-based activities to stretch the body and mind.

Children move, stretch and build an active lifestyle together by learning fitness and sports fundamentals. Activities focus on developing the skills involved in soccer, basketball, baseball, volleyball, hockey, racquet sports, track and field, and golf. The sports program encourages healthy habits and a positive attitude toward physical exercise through fun and physical sports play. Activities are designed to get preschoolers engaged in non-competitive interactive games and sports which emphasize flexibility, confidence and emotional well-being to build strong bodies and minds.

**Crouching Tigers Martial Arts\*:** Crouching Tigers is a mobile fitness and martial arts program offering a curriculum devoted to the physical, emotional, and social development of children. The weekly activities are designed to improve balance, coordination, and other sensory stimuli while reinforcing great social skills in a group environment. Children two years and up will enjoy kicking and punching while learning awareness techniques, traditional martial arts, fitness, and life skills.

**\*10 per week charge**

## **Receipts & Tax Statements**

Any parent wishing to receive a receipt for payment on a regular basis should let the administrative staff know. Receipts will be placed on the child's cubby. Tax statements will be given in the beginning of January per parents request.

## **Admission Policy**

Funshine Children's Center shall accept young children who indicate the emotional readiness for being separated from their parents for the necessary period of time. Parents are encouraged to observe the program, teacher and the children who will be directly associated with their child prior to making a decision to enroll him/her. Parents shall sign and return all forms prior to their child's admission into the program. These forms include Family Information, Parent Agreement, Medical Consent Form, All About Me and Emergency Contact Information. Additional documents which must be submitted include the child's birth certificate, immunization record, and health/physical examination form. Licensing regulations require immunization records and documentation of annual physical (for children under 3 years of age) to be updated annually. All children will be admitted for a probationary period of two weeks for the purpose of evaluating the child's aptitude for the program and the programs appropriateness for the child. When maximum capacity has been reached in the class, new applicants shall be placed on a waiting list and admitted into the program when an opening becomes available.

## **Divorced or Single Parents**

State law requires all divorced and or/separated single parents who wish to restrict spouse or ex-spouse from contact with their children to file a copy of the divorce decree or restraining order with the office. Funshine Children's Center does not wish to get involved with litigation regarding divorce proceedings. If court documents require Funshine's personnel to become involved in such proceedings, the parent making such demands will be required to pay a fee which will cover a substitute teacher and/or for the document preparation time. Since it is in the best interest of all children in our care to maintain their daily schedule and be cared for by the same nurturing personnel, your cooperation in considering these matters will be appreciated.

## **Nap Time**

All children attending have a quiet time/nap time in the afternoon (1:00pm - 3:00pm). For that time, we ask you to provide a travel sized pillow and crib sized blanket plainly labeled with your child's name. Children may also bring a small stuffed animal for comfort. These items should be taken home every Friday to be laundered and returned on Monday.



## **Illness Policy**

Funshine Children's Center prides itself on offering a safe and healthy environment for the children we serve. To ensure the health of all the children under our care we follow the state licensing medication and illness policy for excluding and admitting children to school.

### Medication Policy:

If medication is to be dispensed by the center, it must be sent in the original pharmacy container with a physician's note. If a nonprescription medication is to be given, such as aspirin, cough medicine, etc. A DOCTOR'S ORDER WHICH INDICATES PROPER DOSAGE MUST BE ON FILE. This also includes over the counter items such as sunscreen, lip balm and cough drops. THIS ORDER IS GOOD FOR ONE YEAR ONLY. No medicine is to be given for any other reason, as it is our belief sick children need to be at home.

### Excluding Children With Illness

Children will be excluded from attending for the following reasons:

- Fever: 101.0 degrees and above
- Diarrhea: child may return after 24 hours of a firm stool
- Vomiting: child may return after 24 hours
- Rash: unless a physician has determined it is not contagious
- Purulent Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): child may return after taking antibiotics for 24 hours
- Strep Throat: child may return after taking antibiotics for 24 hours
- Head Lice: Child may return after all nits are removed
- Chicken Pox: all lesions have dried and crusted

It is our policy to call parents only when children have a temperature of 101 degrees or show other signs of illness. If your child becomes ill while in attendance, you will be called to come for him/her immediately (within 1 hour). It shall be the responsibility of the parent to notify the Director immediately when a child has contracted a communicable disease. A Doctor's release shall be required before a child who has been absent due to a communicable disease or surgery can return. A child who has been exposed to a communicable disease outside the Center shall be excluded from attendance for such a time prescribed by the child's physician.

### Excluded Children May Return

- A child is free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for a full 24 hours
- A child has been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours
- A child with a communicable disease may be required to bring a doctor's note stating he/she may return to school

The final decision about whether a child is excluded will be made by the Director and in accordance with state licensing regulations.

## **Serious Illness/Injury**

If a child is injured while at the center, first aid procedures will be followed and the parents

will be notified at pick-up or by telephone. In the event a child's illness or injury appears serious or life threatening 911 will be called and the child will be taken to St. Vincent's Hospital. The parents will be notified immediately. However a Funshine Children's Center staff member will accompany the child until a parent is by the child's side. Medical costs for injuries to children while at school are normally covered by family health insurance, in the same way as costs of injuries sustained elsewhere. Funshine Children's Center does not provide medical or accident coverage nor does it administer any special plan for purchase by parents.

### **Reporting to Parents**

Parent-Teacher conferences are one of the many ways teachers and parents can work together in bringing the best educational program for each child. Teachers are willing to discuss a child's progress at any time. Please feel free to call for an appointment. Evaluations of each child are made twice a year. Regular parent/teacher conferences will be held in the spring and fall. Please watch for notification. Funshine Children's Center also publishes a monthly newsletter to provide parent information. Please watch for your family's copy in your child's folder/cubby at the start of each month.

Funshine Children's Center employees will report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate state officials. In a case involving suspected child abuse or neglect, Funshine Children's Center will allow the proper officials to assume responsibility for notification. Funshine Children's Center may also allow an investigation to take place at the school in accordance with all state statutes and laws regarding the protection of young children.

Parents will be advised of any accident or incident that occurs at school, either in person or through written communication which will be placed in the child's file. Please be sure to check your child's file daily for ALL information and to collect your child's class work.

We are required to keep all records confidential including parent information, phone numbers and personal information. We cannot give out any information without prior consent in writing.

### **Clothing**

Children should be sent to school in play-type/comfortable clothing and closed toe shoes. PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING. In cold weather, please dress your child in a coat, hat, boots and gloves. Children will be outdoors daily when temperatures are above 28 degrees or below 98 degrees, so please dress your child appropriately.

### **Parties, Field Trips and Toys from Home**

On special days such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Valentine's Day, small parties will be held at school. There will be games, special treats and lots of fun.

Parents are welcome to host a birthday party for their child at the school. The best time for a party is usually 3:30 p.m. Please discuss arrangements with your child's teacher. Any treats provided **MUST** be prepared in a commercial kitchen or bakery and are to be in its original unopened package. Many parties are hosted throughout the year. In consideration for the health of the children, we strongly encourage you to bring healthy treats or miniature cupcakes for the children to enjoy rather than large cupcakes or a cookie sheet.

Field trips serve as excellent tool in enhancing curriculum and concepts taught in the classroom. Children 3 years of age or older are eligible to participate in field trips. Teachers will communicate with parents any information about upcoming field trips. Field trip fees are in addition to tuition and typically cost from \$15.00 to \$20.00 per child, plus the cost of a Funshine Shirt. A Parent Permission Slip and any fees must be returned for each child prior to attending any field trip.

We prefer that children do not bring toys from home. Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought, please note that they may be put away in your child's cubby. The exception to this policy will be that a child may bring a favorite sleepy toy for naptime only, and toys may be brought for show and tell activities (if requested by your child's teacher). We are not responsible for any loss or breakage of personal items. All personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name.

## **Lunch & Snacks**

Nutritious meals and snacks are provided throughout the day. Breakfast is served between 6:30 - 8:00 a.m., a mid-morning snack at 9:30, lunch at 12:00, and a mid-afternoon snack at 3:30. Our lunch menu was developed by a nutritionist and consists of a variety of food designed to be nutritious and appetizing. Daily menus may include a hot entrée with beef, chicken, fish or a vegetarian option. If your child has an allergy or special medical need, a Doctor's note must be provided. Menus are posted on the Parent Board in your child's room and a monthly menu is available on our parent board.

## **Arrival and Departure**

Upon arrival please walk your child into his/her assigned classroom. When leaving, please be sure to pick them up from the classroom. Your child's teacher will sign your child in/out by name, time and parent/family member dropping off and picking up for the day. Please make eye contact with and say a quick "hello" to one of the teachers prior to dropping off and picking up your child. Please ensure that your child remains within sight and sound until they are checked into their classroom. Children should not run in the parking lot or gym area and should be supervised at all times.

Please ensure that your child is dropped off before 10:00 a.m. to limit distractions to the

classroom learning environment, and maximize the development of each child at Funshine Children's Center. If on occasion it is necessary that your child arrive later than 10:00 a.m., please advise the teacher, or front office ahead of time. Please be especially courteous of our nap periods of 1:00 – 3:00 each day. Children should not be dropped off between those times as it is disruptive to the other students sleep schedules.

If you have planned for someone else to pick up your child, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office. If this person has already been placed on your pick-up list then a telephone call to notify us will do. If this is the first time this person has picked up your child, A NOTE THAT IS DATED AND SIGNED MUST BE PROVIDED. Please notify this person to report to the office and that a picture I.D. must be presented. Funshine Children's Center will not release a child to any unauthorized person.

Children may only be picked up by an adult or sibling at least 18 years of age. Please refrain from giving the door security code to anyone that occasionally picks up your child. For the safety and security of all children it is mandatory a child NEVER be taken off the playground by lifting them over the fence or taken out through the gates. No child will be released to an individual appearing to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

## **Parking**

Adequate parking is provided for all parents in the front of the building. Be sure to LOCK your car and remove your children and valuables before entering the building, even if you are just staying A SHORT TIME. Please do not block the Fire Zone in front of the building. This area is designated for fire trucks only.

## **Office Hours**

The main office is staffed from 6:30 A.M - 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday to assist parents. If you have any questions, please call or come in and speak with a member of the administrative team.

## **Liability**

Funshine Children's Center cannot recommend anyone for work outside of the Center and will not assume liability or responsibility for any actions by an employee outside of our jurisdiction. Funshine Children's Center is fully insured for any incidents that may occur on our property from our negligence. Accidents that occur are covered by the parents individual insurance policies and are the not the responsibility of the Center.

## **Family Discounts (excludes infants)**

The first child enrolled FULL TIME will pay the full weekly tuition fee. Additional siblings enrolled FULL TIME, YEAR ROUND will be given a \$20.00 per week discount.

## **Discipline Policy**

It is our policy no person shall use corporal punishment or other cruel, harsh or unusual punishment or any humiliating or frightening method to control the actions of any child or group of children. No child of any age shall ever be shaken, hit or spanked. Our teachers use positive guidance and discipline techniques and teach self-management and problem solving skills to children.

## **Exclusion Policy**

Parents may be asked to withdraw a child from the Center at any time if it's determined by the staff that the child's presence is detrimental to him/her or others. A child may be excluded if fees are not paid when due.

## **Drug/ Firearm Policy**

Use of alcohol, tobacco, firearms and illegal substances is strictly prohibited in or around the facility.

## **Payment & Fees**

Upon first admittance, a nonrefundable registration fee of \$100.00 and a deposit (two week tuition/four weeks for Infants) will be due. At that time the child's schedule will be agreed upon by the parents and the Director and a weekly tuition fee will be determined. Weekly fees are to be paid on FRIDAY before services are provided. Anyone paying late will be charged a \$10.00 late fee per week. Late fees take effect Tuesday at noon. I understand tuition charges and other fees will continue until the date indicated by the parent as the date of withdrawal from the program.

If your child will attend Funshine on a part time basis of three or four days per week, we require those days to be specified before beginning our program. If you would like to bring your child on an unscheduled day, the daily rate will apply. The daily rate for children adding days to their part time schedule is as follows: One and Two year olds - \$70 per day, Three and Four year olds - \$50 per day.

Any change of schedule or notice to withdraw a child requires a two week written notice in order for the center to maintain proper class size and supervision. There are no tuition credits for absences for any reason (illness, vacations, or holidays).

A bi-annual material fee of \$70 will be assessed for children ages 2 and up.

Parents who pick up their child after our 6:00 p.m. closing time will be charged \$20.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$2.00 every minute thereafter. In consideration of our employees and families, please allow enough time to gather your child's items and leave by 6:00 p.m.. If a check is returned for any reason, there will be a \$45.00 charge added to

the next regular payment. After the second NSF check, Funshine will no longer accept payment by personal check. Subsequent fees must be paid in cash, by cashiers check or with a money order. Credit cards are not accepted at this present time.

12 Parent tips to help ensure a smooth transition to Funshine:

1. Prior to your child's first day, discuss the school and give him/her some idea of what to expect. Be sure to visit before that time, if at all possible.
2. Plan to bring your child regularly, on a set routine
3. Children shall be brought into the building by parents or guardian. Be sure to take your child to the classroom where a staff person will greet you.
4. If your child seems upset at your departure, please leave and let the staff comfort him/her. Call back if you would like or request the Director to call you.
5. A complete change of clothing is to be kept at school. It is your responsibility to return clothing after it has been laundered. PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING AND BEDDING.
6. Send your child in suitable clothing for indoor and outdoor play. The children will go outside except on rainy/ snowy days or below 33 degrees.
7. A small blanket and half pillow should be kept for napping. It is your responsibility to pick it up each week to launder. Please do not bring large pillows, large stuffed animals, or large pillow pets to school.
8. Children are not to bring money, candy, gum, jewelry or toys to school.
9. Class field trips may be planned at an extra expense above tuition.
10. Please check the lost and found occasionally.
11. Please watch for notes and notices on your child's classroom door.
12. Don't hesitate to contact the school or your child's teacher if you have any questions or comments. Remember, we are all here for the same purpose-to make this time in your child's life as happy and secure as possible!

### **Closing Statement**

We want to take the opportunity to thank you for choosing our center and to let you know that we would like you to consider Funshine as being your "home away from home." We are grateful to care for and educate your children and take such reward and pride in our work as Early Childhood Professionals. Thank you again for choosing our center and we look forward to making many joyful memories with your family.