

# My First Funtime Funtime Pre-School and Funtime After-School

## **Parent Handbook**

Information in this handbook is subject to change at any time without notice. A current handbook is available on our website at [www.funtimeclinton.com](http://www.funtimeclinton.com). Enrolling your child in Funtime confirms your having read and agreed to the terms of this Handbook.

**Reviewed and Revised:** May 2023

### **Vision Statement**

Our vision at My First Funtime, Funtime Pre-school, and Funtime After-school is to provide a premium level of care for children ages six weeks through twelve years, which meets the safety, nutritional, physical, developmental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of the children we serve.

### **Mission Statement**

Funtime is committed to providing a safe, nurturing Christian environment inclusive of all children and their families. We develop the whole child with engaging experiences to teach AGE-APPROPRIATE social/emotional skills and give them the confidence needed to effectively communicate with others. Our compassionate staff is composed of dedicated professionals who provide high quality early education. Funtime's challenging curriculum is comprised of purposeful learning experiences, intentional center play, skill-based activities (literacy, math, gross & fine motor, and STEM) as well as field trips. Funtime offers our families an open-door policy and encourages families to play an active role in their child's early education.

### **Philosophy**

We believe children learn by doing. Therefore, we implement a thematic curriculum using a center-based, hands-on approach focused on Christian principles to prepare children for their future.

### **Statement of Policy**

May we state that we are keenly aware of our responsibility to the children, parents, and community we serve to maintain the highest level of childcare available. We expect every member of our staff and every child enrolled to be of the highest level of character, conduct, and cleanliness. Our policies governing these expectations are strictly enforced. We strive to provide each child and each family with as much personal attention as possible to ensure every reasonable need of every child is met or exceeded.

## **Inclusion Statement**

Funtime strives to develop the whole child. Children at all levels participate in inclusive classrooms where individual needs are prioritized, and instruction is individualized. It is our goal that all children will not only feel included but also receive the highest quality care.

## **Diversity Statement**

Our core values include equity for all. We believe all children have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society. Funtime teachers have a professional obligation to advance equity. Our Funtime community embraces diversity and full inclusion as strengths and seeks to uphold fundamental principles of fairness and justice.

We know that acknowledgements of color, culture, and varying abilities are essential for legitimizing differences. These attributes make each of us special and enable us to offer unique gifts and opportunities to groups we are part of. At the same time, our differences help children learn about each other and the world around them and enrich classrooms. To appreciate what each child can contribute to the classroom, teachers need to learn about each family's cultural values. Helping children see themselves in our pedagogy, curriculum, environment, and materials enables them and their families to feel welcomed and valued.

## **Management**

### **Walter Daniel Owner / Administrator**

Background includes: BS in Business Administration, Mississippi College, 1993. Formerly employed by the MS Attorney General's Office and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. SBA Mississippi 2022 Small Business Person of the Year recipient. Phone: 601-924-6500 E-Mail: funtimeclinton@gmail.com

### **Lesia Daniel Owner / Administrator**

Background includes: BS in Elementary Education, Mississippi College, 1990. Master's in early childhood education. Thirty years of teaching and childcare experience. State of Mississippi Infant Toddler Curriculum Revision Team 2017. Mississippi Department of Education Parent Engagement Curriculum Team 2018. SBA Mississippi 2022 Small Business Person of the Year recipient. Quality Support System Recommendation Team for the State of Mississippi, 2022. Phone: 601-925-5437 E-Mail: lesiafuntimeclinton@gmail.com

## **Staff**

All members of the Funtime staff are carefully selected by checking references and conducting background checks. Teachers are thoroughly trained in teaching and managing children and are always highly supervised. All Management and Staff are required to obtain a minimum number of CEU (staff development) hours each year. In addition, most of our staff members are certified in First Aid and CPR.

## **Curriculum**

Funtime uses the Early Learning Guidelines and Early Learning Standards curriculum recommended by the Mississippi State Department of Education and the Comprehensive Program Designation for high quality early education programs. These standards create a framework to ensure children are ready to process information needed for a smooth transition to the Mississippi College and Career-Ready standards implemented in our public schools' K5 classrooms. All of our lead teachers have been trained to implement these benchmarks using methods that best match the way we know young children learn and develop.

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Enrollment**

All enrollment forms must be completed before your child may attend. Applications are subject to review and approval by Funtime management. We reserve the right to deny any application due to enrollment limitations or medical or behavioral problems or any other reason we feel that enrollment of a child is in any way not in the best interest of Funtime. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, or race for the enrollment of children. Please inform us of any changes in addresses, work and home telephone numbers, places of employment, or individuals authorized to pick up your child. In particular, the state requires for the health of all children that a current Immunization Form 121 be on file. This must be on the state- approved Form 121 provided by area Health Departments or doctor offices.

## **Enrollment Termination**

By enrolling your child at Funtime, you as a parent or guardian give permission for your child to be involved in the activities and events at Funtime. You further understand that Funtime is a private childcare center whose goal is to provide a positive, enriching pre-school and after-school environment. Although rare, a situation may arise in which it becomes evident that the needs of a child cannot be met effectively by our center. A decision to dismiss a child will only happen after we feel every option has been explored. Every reasonable measure will be taken to meet the needs of the child in question, and our director will assess each dismissal not only with regard to the individual child's needs, but also with consideration of the needs of all children served. The parent will be a central figure in discussions regarding this issue, but the decision to dismiss a child must be left to the discretion of our directors and owners. Families may also be dismissed with or without notice at the owners or directors' discretion for non-payment or for any inappropriate behavior, language, actions, or any other reason that continued enrollment is not in the best interest of Funtime.

## **Attendance and Tuition Charges**

Tuition and other fees are to be paid in full without deduction for absences of any duration or for any cause and without substitution of other days of attendance as “make up” days. Please understand that this is because staffing and other operational costs are incurred on the basis of fixed levels of enrollment and because few of these costs are eliminated when the child is temporarily absent. Our tuition charges are “all-inclusive,” meaning there are no additional charges for regular activities, regular field trips, snacks, meals, transportation, or supplies.

## **Payment Policy**

Tuition is due in advance each Monday for the week. Monthly payments in advance (based upon the number of Mondays in a month) are accepted and encouraged. For those parents paying weekly, if tuition is not paid by Wednesday evening, a late fee (see tuition agreement) may be added to the balance due. Statements of your payments are available at any time. If your draft returns for any reason, \$30 will be charged to your account. In the event that you do not make payments or do not give two weeks written notice of withdrawal, you will be given a notice of charges owed. You will then have 15 days from that notice to pay or resolve any disputes with the management of Funtime. You agree to pay any reasonable attorney’s fees or collection agency fees and court costs. Please refer to the current tuition agreement for prices. For your convenience, we accept cash, bank draft, and credit card as forms of payment.

## **Registration Fee**

There is an annual Enrollment Fee per child for Pre-School children. After-School care and Summer Camp also have separate registration fees yearly. Please refer to the current Tuition Agreement for current pricing.

## **Center Hours**

We are open Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 6:00pm. We ask that when picking up your child, you arrive no later than 5:55pm. We close at 6:00pm sharp. Your child has had a long day by this point and so have our teachers and staff. After 6:00pm there will be a late pick-up fee added to your account (see Tuition Agreement). After repeated late pick-ups, you may be asked to find a center that better fits your schedule.

## **Vacation Week**

Please see our current Tuition Agreement for information concerning Vacation Weeks

## Holidays

Funtime observes and will be closed on the following holidays.

New Year's Eve	New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Day
Good Friday	Memorial Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	Day after Christmas

No discount on tuition will be made for holidays or other days on which the facility does not operate or opens late (i.e. snow days, etc.). Funtime may close on a weekday in observance of a holiday that falls on a weekend.

## Inclement Weather

In the event of unusual weather conditions such as snow or ice, you may call us at 601-925-KIDS or 601-924-6500 (after-school center). Though you may use the Clinton Public School closings as a general guideline, we will attempt to open or stay open later to accommodate our parents. Should schools close early for any reason, we will always make every effort to pick up our after-school children and get them back to the center for you to pick them up as soon as possible. We will communicate with families using email, HiMama messages, and/or cell phone information. Please make sure this information stays current in your myprocare account.

## Notifying the Center of Your Intent to Disenroll

From the date you start, your child is considered enrolled in our school until we receive written notice otherwise. A minimum two-week written notice addressed to the owner or Director is required, although we request 30 days if possible. The two weeks begins on the date we receive written notice. This notice is common among high-quality childcare providers and allows us to notify the family of the next child on our waiting list of an opening.

## Daily Check-In and Check-Out

The primary mechanism for ensuring the safety and security of the school is strict adherence to established procedures for your child's arrival and departure, including checking your child in and out via our HiMama app. Families will receive instructions upon enrollment of the process. State regulations require us to know who is in the building at all times. Please note that although we can provide other individuals on your check-out list access to the app for your particular child, photo ID will be requested from anyone our staff is unfamiliar with to confirm identification before allowing pick-up of any child.

## **Morning Drop-Off**

Children may be dropped off between 7:00 and 8:30am each morning. Families should pull all the way forward in the drop-off line, place your vehicle in PARK and remain in the vehicle. Please have your HiMama app open and ready to check your child in. Our staff will take your child's temperature, which you will enter into the app and check your child in. Our staff will take the child/children from the vehicle and ensure they get to their classroom safely. Drop-Off ends at 8:30. If your child has a morning medical appointment or other activity you may request a late drop-off a day in advance. We cannot accept unapproved late arrivals as our drop-off team and entire staff have started the day's activities, and field trip, activity, and meal counts have been processed. No outside food or drinks may be brought inside the building.

## **Pick-up**

You, or anyone on your pick-up list, may pick up your child at any time. Families will be given instructions on the check-out procedure upon enrollment, as they vary slightly at each location. You will use the HiMama app to check out your child and our staff will bring your child to your vehicle. All children must be picked up no later than 6:00pm.

## **Outdoor Time**

State licensing regulations require that children spend 2 hours per day outside. With the exception of extremely cold or hot days, or smoggy days in summer, understand that your children will spend time outside each day. If your child is not well, and you do not want them to go outside, they are not well enough to be at school and need to be kept at home that day.

## **Clothing and Personal Belongings**

Please leave an extra set of clothes for your Pre-School child at all times. Accidents happen, and this will prevent us from calling you to leave work and bring a change of clothes. Please label all clothing with your child's first and last name. We cannot be responsible for lost articles. Please send children to school in play clothes. Long dresses, jelly shoes, cowboy boots, and flip-flops can be dangerous. Rubber soled or non-slippery shoes are best for school. We require that you leave all food, gum, and toys at home. A soft sleep toy is OK for naptime only. As seasons change, please send your child to school with appropriate jackets or coats labeled with his/her name.

## **Food / Birthdays**

We always like to celebrate birthdays at school, however outside food is not allowed to be brought in. We will provide popsicles to have a "party" at school. We will also provide you with a list the email addresses of the children in your child's class if you would like to invite them to an off-site birthday party.

## **Access to Your Child's Classroom**

Parents are permitted access to their child's classroom and play areas by appointment anytime their child is present. We request cooperation, however, in not disturbing our daily activities or distracting the teacher from supervising the class.

## **Procurement Fee for Hiring Funtime Teachers**

Hiring of our teachers by parents is highly discouraged because it presents a conflict of interest for the teacher. If a parent does hire a teacher for a position (i.e. nanny or caregiver) that competes with the center during enrollment or for a period of 12 months after withdrawal from school, then the parents shall have 30 days to notify the center and pay the center a \$2,500.00 placement fee. This fee is common and in line with what many nanny agencies charge for placement. This does not apply to after-hours babysitting.

## **Class Directories**

From time to time, we may provide parents with a list of children in his/her child's classroom. This is mainly for birthday parties or special days. Unless you instruct us otherwise in writing, you agree to allow us to use your name and address for this purpose.

# **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

## **Immunizations**

We ask that your child's immunization record (MS Form 121) be presented with enrollment forms for all My First Funtime and Funtime Pre-School children. You must update and provide a new form as appropriate. Failure to maintain a current Form 121 will result in your child staying home.

## **Illnesses / Medical Conditions**

Please understand that for your child's protection and the protection of our staff and other children, we strictly enforce our illness policy. We kindly request your full cooperation by not bringing in sick children and picking up a sick child within one hour of being called to do so. We cannot allow children with contagious diseases in the Center. A child with fever, diarrhea, excessive cough, or vomiting must go home. You understand that if your child is ill, including, but not limited to a severe cough, undetermined rash or spots, boil, congestion, non-clear runny nose, pinkeye, head lice, temperature over 100 degrees, severe headaches, nausea, diarrhea, or severe sore throat, he/she cannot be accepted into the center until well or until he/she has been without fever or other symptoms for 24 hours. In the event your child has a contagious disease, please notify the center immediately so we may notify other parents. A release form from a doctor may be required before your child re-enters the center. Funtime will notify parents if a contagious disease has been introduced into the center. A child who, due to a temporary health condition, cannot play outside should remain at home. For safety reasons, we are simply not staffed to watch a single child inside while the rest of the class plays outside. A child who is too sick to go outside is too sick to be at school.

## **Medicines**

Funtime does not have medical personnel on staff. The State of Mississippi has strict laws regarding the administration of medication by non-medical personnel. Funtime does not administer medicine except in emergency situations where it is permitted by law. As such, we ask that you not send any medicine to school with your child prior to discussion with Walter Daniel or Lesia Daniel. Anyone on your approval list may come to the school and give your child medicine after advance written notice (via email) to Walter Daniel and Lesia Daniel.

## **Special Medical Conditions**

Funtime does not discriminate against persons with disabilities on the basis of disability and will integrate children with disabilities into its program unless doing so would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others, require a fundamental alteration of the program, or require action(s) by Funtime that are prohibited by law. If your child has a special medical condition for which an accommodation may be needed, please email Walter Daniel and Lesia Daniel. Individualized assessments will be conducted. Any child with special medical conditions or needs will be required to have written documentation from a physician stating his / her individualized medical plan and protocol for action in an emergency.

## **Emergency Information**

It is incumbent upon parents to keep the center informed of how they can be reached at all times in the event of an emergency. This includes all work, home, and cell phone numbers for parents and any other emergency contacts. Because we strive to maintain a safe environment for your child, we make every attempt to be prepared to handle emergency situations. Many members of our staff are trained in first aid and CPR. An emergency plan is posted in each classroom. We conduct regular fire, safety, and tornado drills. The local fire department makes annual inspections with recommendations for improved safety.

## **Accident Reports**

Although many precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment, occasional incidents do and will occur as children explore the world around them. If an incident or injury occurs, first aid is administered. Also, for pre-school children, a digital accident report will be provided. This report will describe the nature of the incident and the follow-up care that was provided.



## **Emergency Medical Care**

Should your child become ill during the time that he/she is in the care of Funtime or suffer a serious accident, the center will contact a parent or guardian immediately and shall be authorized to secure such medical attention, transportation, and care for the child as may be necessary. The parent shall assume responsibility for the cost of any such care. Funtime uses Baptist Hospital as its designated emergency care center. We will make all attempts to contact you and other emergency contact numbers first, so it is important that you keep the center informed in writing as to changes in your telephone numbers (cell, work, home), as well as those of emergency contacts.

## **Building Safety and Evacuation Policy**

Our centers are equipped with a weather band radio, fire alarm system, sprinkler system and fire extinguishers, as well as firewalls and other fire-prevention devices. We conduct fire drills each month to ensure that all staff and children can vacate our buildings quickly (under 2 minutes). We also conduct regular safety (intruder) and tornado drills. In the event of an evacuation, we will work with city and emergency officials in transporting the children to one of our other facilities or First Baptist Church of Clinton. No person who is or who has ever been required to register as a sex offender shall be allowed on any Funtime property while persons under the age of eighteen (18) are present in the building or on the grounds.

## **Biting Policy**

In even the best pre-school settings, periodic outbreaks of biting occur between infants and toddlers. This is an unavoidable occurrence in groups of young children. When it happens, it can be very frightening, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and teachers. Understand that this is not an unusual phenomenon among children who are going through the oral stage of their development. It is also not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers, and there are no quick and easy solutions to it. Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking to be noticed, or intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, and attention. Children may be teething, and biting may be a pleasant sensation to a young child. Knowing that their biting will hurt another person is not yet part of a child's mindset, so the "cause-effect" relationship is not internalized. Our teachers plan activities and supervise carefully to minimize biting. There are times, however, that a teacher cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.

Our policy for handling a biting incident is as follows:

The biter is immediately removed from the group with a firm "NO." The bitten child is consoled, and the bitten area cleaned. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. A MiMama bite report with a photo is sent to the parents. The name of the biting child is not released. We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for patterns to prevent further biting behavior. We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner. We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the biting child do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child.

## **Food and Nutrition**

Meals are included in the price of your tuition. Meals include a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Children are not allowed to share food. Our meals comply with the State and Federal Minimum Nutrition Standards. We use a menu that rotates on a regular basis. Menus are prepared and displayed each month so that parents know what their child is being served. Children are encouraged to take at least one bite of each food offered; however, they are not forced to eat. For safety reasons (i.e. children with severe allergies, etc.) and behavioral reasons (it is better if all children are served the same food), no other food is allowed in the center.

In the case of special dietary needs as prescribed by a physician, parents may be asked to furnish the food items and/or make arrangements with the Director. Please notify the Director and your child's teacher of any food allergy your child may have, including the severity of such an allergy and what to do in the event a child accidentally ingests such food. We will take your child's picture and post it in the kitchen and in the classroom. Understand that we will make every reasonable effort to accommodate children with food allergies or other food restrictions, but there are limits to what can be done in a large, group- care setting.

## **Nap Time / Rest Time**

Adequate rest or quiet time is a very important part of a young, growing child's day. Infants are always allowed to nap as needed but as your child graduates to one nap per day beginning in our toddler rooms, a rest period will follow lunch each day. All toddlers are provided their own cot and are encouraged to sleep or rest for a period of time appropriate for their age. Blankets and/or stuffed animals that are special to your child are encouraged to help your child feel more comfortable and secure.

## **Toilet Training**

We will be happy to assist you in the toilet training of your child. Parents are asked to initiate the training at home before starting at Funtime. We require a toilet consultation with parents before we begin training at school. The child should be able to communicate verbally or by using gestures before we begin training. Once training has begun, consistency is crucial. Please bring training pants with plastic pants or pull-ups and dress your child in easily manipulated clothing.

## **Diaper Changes**

Diapers are checked and changed as frequently as necessary to maintain the health and cleanliness of the child. Hand washing and area sanitization is performed before and after each change.

## **Water / Sun Safety**

Sun-safe practices will be followed to promote and ensure the safety of all children. Funtime will apply sunscreen to children as necessary. When children swim, lifeguards will be on duty and the staff/child ratio will be met. Funtime staff along with pool lifeguards will ensure all children follow all swimming rules. No child will be allowed in water deeper than what he or she can touch the bottom of the pool with his or her head out of the water, except for children who have parent/guardian permission to take and have passed the Funtime Swim Test (must jump off diving board and fluently swim across and exit the deep pool without assistance). Children must have completed 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to be eligible to take the Swim Test.

## **Discipline**

At Funtime we use the method of “redirection” to guide children toward appropriate behavior. If a child is engaged in behavior non-conducive to a safe and happy learning environment, the teacher will “redirect” the child toward appropriate behavior. We believe that behavior is a child’s method of communication. We strive to understand what the child is trying to communicate and implement accommodations to teach the child an appropriate response to the stimuli or circumstance. Use of physical punishment or harsh language is prohibited, and we ask that parents and guardians refrain from such actions while at the center, including the parking lot. We will work with children and parents as much as possible to correct negative behavior patterns. School-age children receive written discipline reports for serious behavior problems. Three discipline reports within 12 months will result in the child being removed from our program. Behavior that invades the rights of other children, such as stealing, fighting, or using foul language, may result in immediate, permanent removal from our program.

NEITHER CORPORAL PUNISHMENT NOR TOTAL ISOLATION SHALL BE USED AS DISCIPLINE MEASURES IN LICENSED CHILDCARE FACILITIES.

## **Mandated Reporting Information**

Teachers and Directors are required by law to report evidence of child neglect or abuse. Those who fail to report according to state regulations can be held accountable under the law. No one, including school management and/or a child’s parents, can interfere with this reporting requirement.

## **Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco**

The use or presence of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs is prohibited in the building or anywhere on the grounds by any staff, parent, or visitor. Smoking is NOT allowed in the facilities or in the parking lot, and we ask parents to refrain from disposing of cigarettes on the grounds.

## **Homework**

After snack and a short outside play time, After-School children will be required to work on their written homework assignments. Our teachers assist with homework until every child has completed his/her work and it has been checked for accuracy. We usually do not do homework on Wednesdays (skate day) and Fridays (field trip day).

## **Transportation**

Funtime Pre-School and After-School conduct regular field trips and provide transportation for such. Funtime After-School will pick up children from Clinton Park, Northside, Eastside, Clinton Christian Academy, and Lovett at their dismissal time daily. Parents will be responsible for informing us (mark absent in Himama app), before school dismissal, if their child is not at school or will not be riding our bus for any reason. A \$15.00 fee will be charged for failing to meet this requirement.

Funtime will follow the transportation policy as stated below:

1. All drivers will be appropriately licensed for the vehicle they are driving.
2. All vehicles will have current licenses and registrations, and proof of insurance.
3. Children board or leave the vehicle from the curbside of the street when applicable.
4. Seat restraints will be used.
5. Proper teacher/child ratio shall be met during transportation.
6. Children will sit and be dismissed off the bus by class, with their caregivers.
7. Headcount/roll check will occur while entering and exiting the bus to make sure every child is accounted for.
6. After transporting children, the bus or vehicle will be checked by a teacher and the bus driver. The teacher will walk the entire aisle and visibly check each seat to ensure every child has exited the vehicle. The teacher will notify the driver that her check is complete, and the driver will then do a second check of the vehicle.

## **Insurance**

Funtime carries liability insurance only. It is the parent's responsibility to maintain a health and accident insurance policy for each child.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

Each month we create activity calendars for each age group. These calendars serve the purpose of keeping parents informed about the following: snacks, meals, activities, weekly units, daily lessons, field trips, what to bring, holiday closings, picture day, and other important information. Calendars are sent via email and are available on our website. Paper copies are also available by request.

## **Pre-School Daily Reports**

Your child's daily information is available in your HiMama app.

## **HD streaming Cameras**

We provide complimentary access via a secure Internet Server to the cameras in your child's classroom and playground, so that you may view the activities and your child's participation in those activities. Access to our system is limited by password protection. To protect the privacy of all children and staff, recording is not allowed at any time except by Funtime. We reserve the right to discontinue streaming service to anyone who we feel is abusing the system in any way or compromising the privacy or rights of others.

## **Parent Grievance Procedure**

If an issue arises that cannot be addressed by your child's teacher, we ask that you notify one of our directors. If you still feel that your issue has not been addressed properly, please feel free to contact the owner. The owners of our centers are onsite daily and welcome your input.

## **School Pictures**

We have arranged with an outside vendor to take pictures of your pre-school child 2-3 times each year. You will be given advance notice of the schedule so that you can prepare your child. Purchase of pictures is optional and is made directly with that vendor.

## **Enrichment Programs**

From time to time, we will offer enrichment classes (dance, music, KinderTOTs, etc...) for children. We will post information as these classes become available. These classes are over and above our regular curriculum and are generally taught by professionals from outside our center. Parents pay these professionals directly. Information will be sent to parents via email or Himama message.