



School Handbook

2022-2023

*“All Belong,
All Learn,
All Lead,
To Succeed.”*

501-663-6965

1617 Brookwood Drive • Little Rock, AR 72202

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Academy Contact Information

Easterseals Academy Administration

Academy Director:

Karye Brockert
Phone (501) 663-6965
Email: kbrockert@eastersealsar.com

Vice President of Therapy and Education:

Suzie Baker
(501) 221-8419
Email: sbaker@eastersealsar.com

Program Coordinator

Tricia Williams
Phone (501) 663-6965
Email: twilliams@eastersealsar.com

Outpatient Therapy Director

Connie Bracy
(501) 227-3600 ext. 8438
Email: cbracy@eastersealsar.com

Instructional Coordinator

Amanda Griffin
Phone: 501-663-6965
Email: agriffin@eastersealsar.com

Teachers

Makayla Askins
Email: maskins@eastersealsar.com

Chloe Bell
Email: chloe.bell@eastersealsar.com

Aubree Cole
Email: acole@eastersealsar.com

DeMia Hendrix
Email: demia.hendrix@eastersealsar.com

Olivia Morganti
Email: olivia.morganti@eastersealsar.com

Jeanie Ralph
Email: jralph@eastersealsar.com

Kally Smith
Email: kally.smith@eastersealsar.com

Easterseals Academy

Phone: 501-663-6965
Fax: 501-603-0675
Email: frontdesk@academyatriverdale.com

WELCOME

Welcome to Easterseals Academy

The staff of the Easterseals Academy looks forward to being a part of your student's team. The Academy considers every student a precious gift. We are excited about helping students with developmental delays, physical and cognitive limitations, and learning differences work toward their highest potential. The Academy provides educational and support services for school age children that are tailored to their unique needs. There are separate classrooms for children of different ages and ability levels, with a low teacher-student ratio.

At Easterseals Academy we value education, experience, and a dedication to working with students. Each classroom has a teacher and paraprofessional. Speech, Occupational, and Physical Therapy services are available.

Easterseals Arkansas began operating the Academy in August 2017. Easterseals Arkansas is a non-profit organization that provides support, services, and education to individuals from birth through adulthood with disabilities. In addition to the Academy, Easterseals Arkansas offers the following services/programs:

- High School Transition
- Post-Secondary Education and Training
- Independent Living Apartments
- Home Based Waiver Services
- Adult Training & Wellness Center
- Butler Adult Living Center
- Children's Rehabilitation Center
- Developmental Preschools in Little Rock and Stuttgart
- Outpatient Therapy Services
- High Risk Infant Monitoring
- Outreach Program

The size of Easterseals Arkansas and the variety of services offered provides Academy students easy access to a variety of services and resources to better meet your child's needs.

The Academy strongly encourages you to stay informed and be actively involved in your student's learning process. The purpose of this handbook is to answer your questions about school procedures. Feel free to contact us should you need any other information.

ACCREDITATION

Easterseals Academy is fully accredited by Cognia Accreditation- Based on a set of rigorous research-based standards and evidence-based criteria

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

Easterseals Arkansas provides exceptional services, education, outreach, and advocacy so that people with disabilities can live, learn, work and play in our communities. Easterseals Arkansas has been helping individuals with disabilities and special needs, and their families, live better lives for more than 75 years. From child development centers to physical rehabilitation and job training for people with disabilities, Easterseals offers a variety of services to help people with disabilities address life's challenges and achieve personal goals.

At the Academy, *All Belong, All Learn, All Lead, to Succeed*

ADMISSIONS

Easterseals Academy strives to provide an education, including both academic and functional skills, for students who have disabilities and need more individualized instruction. Therapy services are available at the school. Easterseals Academy focuses its programming on students who need and will benefit from the integration of academics and therapy. Students enrolled receive therapy through Easterseals Academy as part of their educational plan.

Although diagnostic labels often provide some indication of individual capabilities, specific labels do not necessarily indicate appropriateness for this school. A student is considered for enrollment based upon his or her individual developmental and academic profile. The evaluation process is not exclusionary, but ensures that this school can meet the needs of the applicant, as well as continue to work for the students who are currently enrolled.

Due to budget constraints and limited staffing, Easterseals Academy does not possess the ability to hire one-to-one support, or full time nursing staff. Therefore, if your child has needs that require either of these supports or is not potty trained, we will not be able to provide adequate services to meet those needs. In addition, Easterseals Academy retains complete discretion with respect to acceptance.

New students are admitted for a 60-day probationary period. If at any time during this period, either party feels that the student is not benefiting from, or is disrupting the current Easterseals Academy environment, the student will be considered for discharge.

HOURS OF OPERATION

School Hours

Easterseals Academy is open for the academic school year August through May. School hours are 8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The school has also traditionally offered an EIDT summer session June through July. The cost of the summer session is not included in the base tuition.

Therapy Services

Easterseals Academy provides occupational, physical, and speech-language therapy year-round.

School Closings

School is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Week, and 2 weeks for Winter Break. While the students are out Easterseals Academy is open during some of these breaks for students to receive therapy. Revised therapy schedules are provided during school breaks. Please refer to the school calendar for specific dates for regularly scheduled closings.

Inclement Weather

Should Easterseals Academy be closed, have a delayed start, or dismiss early due to inclement weather, we will send out a blackboard notification.

If we need to close early during the day/afternoon, we will call you to pick up your child. Please make sure to keep your emergency contact list current.

Since weather conditions vary in different parts of the city/state, we understand that some children may not be able to attend on inclement weather days. Please call and let us know if you are unable to attend. Safety is our primary concern for the children, their families and our staff.

Arrival and Departure

There is a 15 minute window for students to arrive at school, 8:15-8:30. After 8:30 the student will be counted tardy. Dismissal is 3:15-3:30. After 3:30, you will be charged for aftercare.

We do offer early morning and after school care for a separate fee. See page 6 (Extended Care) for more information.

Traffic Flow

It is extremely important that the following guidelines are observed at all times to ensure safety of the student

- Please be on time.
- Drive slowly (creep) in the parking lot (Speed limit under 5 mph).
- 1st arrival should pull up to the first cone.
- Other drivers should line up behind the preceding car.
- No student will be permitted to cross in front of a car.
- Cars should not be left unattended in the carpool lane.
- All entries are to be made on the right hand side of the car, but the Director can make exceptions on an individual basis.
- Once the student is safely in the vehicle, please stay in line and wait for the cars ahead of you to move forward.
- Before 8:15 a.m. and/or after 3:30 p.m., please come into the office to sign your student in/out. There will be a fee for every student who arrives before 8:15 a.m. or is left after 3:30 p.m that is not enrolled in extended care. (Please refer to page 5 in your handbook).

Extended Care

Monthly Morning Care (7:30am-8:1am) \$45.00

Monthly Aftercare (3:30pm-5:30pm) \$185.00

Monthly Morning and Aftercare \$230

In the case of an emergency, a child may use the services if space is available. Front desk should be contacted to arrange for extended care. The cost is \$10.00 per day.

The charge for late pick-up (after 3:30 if not enrolled in extended care and after 5:30 if enrolled in extended care) is as follows:

Late pick-up 3-5 times during a month	\$25.00
Late pick-up 6 -10 times per month	\$50.00
Late pick-up 11-15 times per month	\$100.00
Late pick-up > 15 times per month	\$110.00

ATTENDANCE

Expectations:

Regular and consistent attendance is necessary for students to reach their full potential. Students are expected to be in school unless they are absent due to sickness, medical appointments, family emergencies, or other documented, excused absences. Students are expected to have an 85% attendance rate. Attendance is taken daily. The school will notify you if absenteeism or tardiness becomes excessive. Continued excessive absenteeism or tardiness may result in discharge from the school. For students whose tuition is partially paid by the Succeed Scholarship, the Academy is required to report to the State Board of Education if any student participating in the program ceases to be enrolled in or regularly attends the private school for any reason. However, the Director retains the discretion to excuse any absence, based on the individual needs of the student.

Absences:

If your student will be absent from school, please notify the front desk before **8:00 a.m. each day**. Please let the office know 24 hours in advance when your student has a planned absence so that adjustments can be made to your student's schedule. The parent will be contacted if the student is not at school and we have no prior notification of the absence.

Excused Absence:

Students will be excused for absences with a doctor's excuse. All other absences must be excused by the Director.

Tardiness:

Punctuality is a matter of primary importance in the education process. Students, when tardy, disrupt the educational process and jeopardize their own academic achievement. Arriving late to

school or departing school early are both considered tardies. Tardies for emergency medical reasons or multiple medical tardies will be considered on an individual basis. 5 unexcused tardies will equal (1) unexcused absence.

Check-in and Check-out:

If your student will be arriving at school late or leaving early, please notify the front office.

Students cannot leave school during the school day with anyone other than a parent or legal guardian, unless otherwise specified in writing by the parent or legal guardian. The school keeps on file a "Permission to Check Out" form for each student that includes the names of those individuals permitted to check a student out of school. For the safety of the students, the administrative office may require identification from anyone checking out a student. Students will not be released to unauthorized persons.

All students who arrive after 8:30 a.m. must be accompanied by a parent or guardian into the building and be signed in. Do not drop your student at the door. The sign-in log is located at the front desk. Academy staff will ensure the student makes it to class. If a student arrives after 8:30 or leaves before 3:00 it will be counted as a tardy.

COMMUNICATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Academy encourages frequent communication among parents, teachers, therapists, and the administration staff. While we understand the need for cell phones and other social media, we want to make sure that these modes of communication are used appropriately between staff members and parents. We ask teachers to limit cell phone use during instruction time, so urgent communication during the school day should go through the front office.

Take-home Folders

Each student will be assigned a take-home notebook for the classroom in which teachers and parents are encouraged to relay information or questions on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to use these folders to ask questions and make comments or recommendations regarding their student's progress. Classroom folders will go home daily.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

As part of Easterseals Academy commitment to involving parents in their child's education, parents will have designated conferences during the school year with their child's teacher and therapists to discuss progress. Parents and staff are welcome to request additional conferences.

Parent School Connection

Our parent/teacher association is called the Parent School Connection. The purpose of this group is to implement programs that benefit students of Easterseals Academy and to support the activities and programs of the school through financial and voluntary support. Parents are encouraged to participate in this organization.

Volunteer Opportunities

Easterseals Academy relies on parents for volunteer hours and for donation of supplies. Parents are encouraged to volunteer. Volunteer opportunities include:

- Set-up before or clean up after a school sponsored or Parent School Connection sponsored event
- Chaperoning during a school sponsored or Parent School Connection sponsored event
- Attending field trips
- Answering phones or interacting with children during teaming meetings

In addition, parents are expected to be responsive to requests to provide supplies for the first day of school and periodically throughout the school year.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The staff of Easterseals Academy strive for excellence in the delivery of services to your students. This includes a commitment to confidentiality. In working with your student, some information may need to be obtained from other organizations (i.e. previous therapy records, evaluations) in order to adequately educate and/or treat your student. Communication with outside sources will only be conducted with your written consent. Easterseals Academy complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy rule.

Private insurance carriers request medical audits. Audits are conducted in accordance with HIPAA regulations.

Limits to confidentiality include concerns about student abuse, threats of suicide, and danger to self or others, and other issues that require staff to make reports to legal authorities.

If you observe what you believe to be a violation of student confidentiality, please immediately bring it to the attention of the Academy Director or Therapy Director for Easterseals Arkansas. Their contact information is provided in the staff directory section of this handbook.

GOAL PROCESS

Because students have varied learning needs, each student's academic plan is developed to accurately reflect student progress and encourage achievement of specific academic skills.

Academic Goals

Each school year, students are evaluated using multiple assessment tools to determine their current levels of academic functioning. From these assessment results, teachers write academic goals to address specific learning deficits. These goals are reviewed during conferences. When or if a goal is mastered or discontinued parents are notified and the new/replacement goal will be implemented in the child's Education Plan.

Progress is measured by teachers and therapists quarterly.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips enhance learning and practice functional skills. Field Trip Permission Forms are sent home prior to each field trip with the option of participating in the field trip or remaining home for the day.

PARENT PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED for the success of outside activities. Siblings are not allowed on field trips. Parents attending field trips are responsible for the safety and supervision of their student(s). For safety and insurance purposes, parents are not allowed to ride the bus to or from any activities.

DRESS CODE

Students are active throughout the day in a variety of settings. Student dress should be comfortable, clean, and allow for participation in therapy sessions and physical education activities. Please remember function over fashion is the rule at school. Parents will be called to bring appropriate attire when necessary.

Dress Requirements

Comfortable, neatly groomed, and modest

Caps or hats may not be worn unless the administration gives specific approval.

Change of Clothing

Each student is required to have a seasonal change of clothing at school at all times. In the event that a student's clothing becomes soiled, the student will be assisted in making a discrete change, thus protecting his/her dignity and causing minimal disruption to the student's schedule. When this change of clothing is not available, the student's routine is interrupted and the parent will be contacted to bring a change of clothes or pick up the student from school.

Grooming and Hygiene

Good grooming and hygiene habits are very important for socialization and the health of all students. Students are expected to bathe, keep hair clean and well groomed, and keep fingernails trimmed short. It is the responsibility of the parents and students to maintain these habits.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Illness

If a student is ill, it is difficult to participate in the daily routine; consequently, students should not be brought to school if they have a fever of 100 F° oral temperature, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Students should be free of fever (without medication), diarrhea, or vomiting for 48 hours before returning to school and cleared by the nurse line.

If a student becomes ill at school or demonstrates symptoms typical of one who is ill, the parent will be contacted. The administrative office must have two working telephone numbers where parent/guardian can be reached during the school day. Parents will need to plan alternative care for their student if the student becomes ill and the parent is unable to leave work. The school does not have facilities or personnel to care for students who are ill.

COVID-19

If your child is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19 or you are unsure, PLEASE CALL THE COVID-19 NURSE LINE at (501) 406-2567.

Injury

A first aid kit for minor injuries is located in the office. If a student's injury appears to be more serious, the parent will be notified immediately, and care will be provided until the student's medical needs are met. First aid care options include:

- Making the student comfortable
- Notify parents
- Calling an ambulance in the event of a serious or potentially life-threatening injury

Medications

If a student requires the administration of oral prescription medication during the school day, the following procedures will apply:

Staff will administer medication only with written permission from parents **AND with a doctor's prescription**. A medication form for each medication must be completed by parents and on file before any medication can be given.

Procedure:

Medications **must be provided** to the front desk by each student's parent/guardian; no medication will be received from the students. The medication must be in the original bottle. **It must be labeled with the child's name, date, exact dosage (not as needed), doctor, and expiration date. All prescription and non-prescription medications must be labeled in this manner.** The pharmacist should label the medication with the necessary information. If the medication is to be given daily, a bottle may be kept at school. When empty, the bottle will be sent home for parents to refill.

Medications scheduled every 6 or every 4 hours will be administered at the Academy. All other medication times are the responsibility of the parents. We ask that parents administer medicine at home whenever possible. Staff will make every effort to give medications at the exact time requested by the parent.

Parents are not to place medications of any kind in a child's backpack. All medications are to be in locked cabinets or drawers to ensure children's safety.

Allergies, Asthma, Seizures

Children with documented allergies, asthma or seizures, will need to have an allergy action plan, asthma action plan and/or seizure action plan on file at The Academy. The action plan is a document provided by your child's doctor that gives staff at The Academy instructions on how to manage the allergy, asthma or seizure and when to seek medical treatment. This documentation must be provided in order for staff to safely care for your child.

Immunizations

State law requires every student in the school setting to be immunized against certain diseases. A record from the health department or the student's physician documenting these required and dates given must be kept on file. It is the parent's responsibility to provide these documents to the school. Religious, medical, and philosophical exemptions can be obtained through the Arkansas Department of Health. However, proof of exemption letters must be obtained each year and provided to the school for their records

Visitors

All visitors are required to sign the Visitor Log at the front office upon entering the building. This includes school volunteers. For the safety and security of students and staff, there are no exceptions. All visitors must complete the COVID-19 screening process before entry into the school.

Emergency Drills

For the safety of all students, staff, and visitors, the facility was designed with smoke detectors, heat detectors, and sprinklers throughout the building.

Fire and severe weather drills are held on a regular basis throughout the year. All teachers and therapists are responsible for knowing the exit plan for the students in their care. If there is a need to evacuate the building, the students will leave the building accompanied by the teacher/therapist. They will follow the designated emergency exit route to a predetermined location where they will remain until notified that it is safe to return to the building.

Emergency Information

All students are required to have an Emergency Information Form on file. You must provide two daytime phone numbers, and a physical address. Should an emergency occur, valuable time can be lost if adequate and correct information is not immediately available. You are asked to complete this form at the beginning of each school year. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school of any change in the emergency information and to keep all information up-to-date.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Students are required to bring their own, ready-to-eat lunches.

While students are given an adequate amount of time to eat their lunches and encouraged to do so, staff will not be responsible for making students eat. Lunchboxes will be repacked and leftovers returned home so that parents will know how much was consumed.

Snacks are allowed, but are not provided by Easterseals Academy.

WEATHER GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR PLAY/RECESS

Temperature--Heat	Outdoor Policy
Heat index greater than 95 degrees	No outdoor play
Temperature--Cold	Outdoor Policy
Wind chill below 32 degrees	No outdoor play

When a child is healthy enough to attend school, he/she is healthy enough to participate in playground and/or physical education activities in and out of doors. A child may be exempted from physical education and/or outdoor play due to injury or illness with a physician's note for a specified period of time. Please be sure to label jackets, etc. with your student's name.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

Behavior management will be tailored to individual student needs. If a student demonstrates undesirable behavior, the following strategies will be utilized:

- If attention seeking and not disruptive towards the class, ignore the behavior.
- If behavior is significant enough to require intervention, redirect and use positive reinforcement.
- If behavior becomes disruptive to class or an activity, remove the student from the class or activity, help the student to calm and regroup, and then allow them to rejoin class or activity.

- If behavior is constantly disruptive to class, aggressive in nature, or causes harm or has potential to cause harm to self, other students, or staff, the student will be removed from school until the staff can meet with the parent/guardian to develop a behavior plan.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photography is used at school for both education and community awareness. Students may be included in photos, audio/visual recordings, broadcasts, advertising, and publications. Should you prefer that your student not be included in photos, please notify the administrative office in writing.

TRANSPORTATION

Easterseals Academy does not provide transportation to and from school. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from school.

LOST AND FOUND

Parents are encouraged to label all belongings. If your student has lost something, please check with your student's teacher to see if the missing item can be located.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Supplies for your student are due on or before the first day of school. If you have any questions about the supply list, please contact your student's teacher.

HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of Easterseals Academy 2021-2022. Parent Handbook. I am aware that this handbook contains information and procedures for review.

I am aware that Easterseals Academy reserves the right at any time to amend or to add to the procedures and regulations contained or referred to in this handbook. I am also aware that any changes or updates to this handbook will be shared with me.

To ensure that all parties have read the procedures and agree to abide by them, please sign below and return this page..

Signature of Parent

Date

Student Name