

CAL ELITE KIDS PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN ACADEMY HANDBOOK

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Cal Elite Kids Preschool and Kindergarten Academy

Parent Handbook

Welcome!

Beginning school is an important step in your child's life. We truly believe that every child is special. Every child learns and grows in ways that are unique. We believe that every child is delightful, interesting, challenging, engaging, and full of hope and possibilities. We commend you for your decision to enroll your child in a preschool program. Studies have shown that children in high quality schools have enhanced language and early math skills. They are creative and independent and are able to thrive in a structured setting. Children who participate in an enriched learning environment are interested and adept at playing with other children and they enter kindergarten or first grade ready and eager to make friends.

We believe that parents are the primary educators in a child's life. We will always value and trust your personal parenting philosophies and goals. We feel fortunate to be able to join you in providing an enriched learning environment for your child. We are dedicated to our role in helping our students foster a desire to learn, and in providing a rich and full preschool and kindergarten experience for your child.

What distinguishes Cal Elite Kids' Academy?

We live in a community where there are many quality learning environments available to our children. Most successful school programs share common academic and operational philosophies as they embrace similar goals for quality and excellence. Our program is exceptional and unique in that we are able to augment our strong academic curriculum with an extremely high quality athletic, artistic, and musical curriculum. We believe that our commitment to these specialty studies and the quality of our programs in these areas distinguishes our Preschool and Kindergarten Academy from any other. We believe that the pursuit of the arts, music, performance, and athletics is equal to the pursuit of language and mathematics and we pride ourselves in the quality of our specialty programs. During the course of the week, your child will study ballet, tap, and jazz. He or she will take gymnastics and tumbling in the same program that has developed top state champions. Swimming is an election and your preschooler may choose to receive year-round swimming lessons in our indoor pool. Your child will study art under the guidance of professional artists and will work in several mediums including water-colors, pastels, pencil, clay, and fabric. Our students will also participate in our Theater Workshop and will present a theatrical production showcasing their developing musical, dance, gymnastics, performance, and artistic skills. We look forward to sharing these many marvelous experiences with you and your child.

Our Philosophy

We believe

- childhood is a wondrous time
- children should be allowed time for their childhood and should be guarded from statistical expectations
- children need to feel safe, supported and happy all the time.
- parents are the first educators of children and play the most important role in establishing and maintaining their child's learning environment.
- parents, families, and educators have an unconditional and affirmative responsibility to provide children with experiences and opportunities to grow, learn, and play.
- all learning should be meaningful and fun
- children should be actively involved in the learning process.
- children learn about themselves and the world around them by playing and talking.
- children learn best through hands-on experiences.

- children learn by trying and succeeding and celebrating success and
- children learn by trying and making mistakes
- children need time and space to produce work of quality and depth.
- preschoolers are amazingly capable of producing work of quality and depth.
- children need to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning.
- children who are encouraged to think for themselves are more likely to act independently.
- children whose actions and thoughts are noticed, recognized, and appreciated learn to think for themselves.
- individuality, whether by virtue of race, religion, or ethnicity should be valued and promoted, as should individuality by virtue of personality, interests, talents and personal expression.

We also believe that as educators and care-givers, it is our good fortune to be able to...

- encourage self-identity.
- promote self-reliance and independence.
- encourage the child to excel in his or her efforts and to take pride in the process as well as the result
- help the child master and gain confidence with basic routines and rules.
- develop his or her language and communication skills
- provide exposure to books, art, play materials, learning and experiences that are above and beyond what is provided at home
- encourage freedom of action in spaces that are designed and equipped for young children
- help develop the child's fine and gross motor skills through varied and meaningful activities
- help the child to accept and appreciate themselves
- help the child to accept and appreciate others and to respect their feelings, rights, and property.
- encourage and applaud creative expression and the appreciation of the arts.
- foster the development of language arts skills, including listening, comprehension, letter recognition, reading and communication.
- to encourage the understanding of math concepts through hands on experiences and the learning of numbers and numerical value.
- to encourage the discovery of nature and the world around us, to think, question, and reason.
- to promote an understanding of culture and community and instill a sense of empowerment with respect to promoting change, improvement, service, and good will.
- to encourage expression, grace, athleticism, flexibility, rhythm, and accomplishment through dance
- to encourage strength, power, athleticism, flexibility, and accomplishment through gymnastics
- to promote an appreciation and understanding of music through participation in song and through the study of violin.
- To help the child gain critical skills in water safety and swimming and to instill a love and enjoyment of the water.
- To help the child gain confidence, presentation skills, team work, and theatrical appreciation through participation in theatrical workshops.

Our Facility

Location

Cal Elite Kids Academy operates out of the California Elite Sports Center at 22982 Avenida Empresa, in the city of Rancho Santa Margarita. The facility offers over 30,000 square feet of space designed to accommodate children in a variety of activities.

Classrooms

We have three classrooms located in our big gym and one dance room that may be utilized as learning space. These rooms are housed with state of the art preschool furnishings, materials and supplies. The rooms have natural light, and are clean and spacious.

Preschool Gymnastics Center

We have a separate preschool gymnastics center with equipment specifically designed for young children. This room is filled with tiny gymnastics apparatus, mats, and play equipment. It is designed with a colorful and inviting park like setting and is affectionately referred to as our "Tumble Bee Gym."

Big Gym Play Areas

Our large youth sports center boasts 2 large open floor play areas, a musical theater/performance arts theater, and specialized youth activity apparatus and equipment. These large open spaces are heavily utilized in our preschool program for games and activities, including gymnastics lessons, parachute activities, basketball play, soccer instruction and games, and other playground games. The cushioned flooring ensures the safest of surfaces for our busy students.

Dance Studios

We have 1 dance studio down stairs and 4 dance studios upstairs, each with parent viewing areas. The dance studios are built on an elevated foam subflooring ensuring the safest and healthiest dance environment possible. The studios are spacious, light, and clean with mirrors, dance bars, music systems, and all the necessities for dance.

Garden

Our Sunshine Garden is located in our south/east facing play yard. This working garden is maintained by the children on a year-round basis. The children's experience in selecting, planting, caring and harvesting their garden treasures helps them to learn about nature, plant life, weather cycles, work ethic, and responsibility. The children take great pride in their Sunshine Garden and continually impress us with their gardening skills!

Teachers

Our teachers are highly trained and qualified to serve your child. Our teachers are dedicated to your child's individual growth and development. Our teachers are held to the highest standards in childhood education with respect to their required education, relevant experience, and effectiveness in the classroom. Our entire staff has been carefully selected through a series of rigorous interviews, training and background checks, and reference checks, to ensure that your child is safe and has a wonderful learning experience.

Safety

Your child's safety is one of our primary concerns at Cal Elite Kids. We conduct extensive professional background checks, including criminal background and child related background checks, on every employee at Cal Elite, from our teachers, coaches, front desk staff, janitorial crews etc. Our facility is equipped with 24 hour camera surveillance (covering entrances and common areas) which is backed up to an independent off site server. Our staff is trained regarding the personal safety and security of children including matters related to stranger presence on site, confidentiality of student records, proper signing in and out of students, etc. Our Directors and Program Managers are certified in Pediatric First Aid and Pediatric CPR. We are strategically located on the same street ½ mile from OC Fire Station 45, which is a paramedic van station. We purchased this building in 2002 brand new and built it out specifically for the use of children. We were required to meet Title 22 as well as all state and local building codes and our Occupational Use Permit mandated that our facility had to be in compliance in every way for the safety of the public, specifically children. We have strict procedures and practices in place with respect to the safety of each child and consider safety in every decision and activity that we offer.

Programs

Cal Elite Kids Academy's curriculum is comprised of 5 areas of Learning and Development: Academic, Artistic, Athletic, Social, and Leadership. Our curriculum seeks to provide a full and varied learning environment that will provide immediate and current enjoyment learning for your child and will also prepare him or her for a positive transition into Kindergarten.

Academic

- Language Arts
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Speaking
 - Listening
- Math Skills
 - Numerical Identification
 - Numerical Value and Association
 - Early Math Concepts
 - Time, Sequencing, Order
- Science, Nature and the World
 - The Animal World
 - The Plant Kingdom
 - Weather, Climate
 - The Earth

Social

- Self Identity and Respect
- Appreciation and Respect for Others
- Cultural Awareness
- Manners, Compassion, Optimism

Athletic

- Gymnastics
- Tumbling
- Swimming
- Dance
- Fitness Fun

Artistic

- Appreciation of the Creative Process
- Fine Arts
 - Painting
 - Drawing
 - Clay
 - Fabric
- Music
 - Singing
 - Listening
 - Representations of Sound (Visual/Verbal)
 - Instruments

Leadership

- My Community
- My Family
- My Friends
- Empowerment
- Choices
- Character

Admission

Criteria

Cal Elite Kids Preschool and Kindergarten Academy serves children ages 3 – 6 years old (or until they enroll in first grade.) Admission is open to all children, regardless of sex, race, religion, or ethnicity. Students must be in good health and able to participate in a school setting, as verified by a health care provider. Students must be completely toilet trained and able to use the restroom independently.

Application Process

Applications are accepted year-round for admission into the Cal Elite Kids Academy. The application process begins with an initial inquiry appointment at which time we will tour the facility with you; provide you with information about our Preschool Academy, including the application packet; and answer any questions you may have. Upon completion of the Application Packet, we will contact you regarding your child's application status.

The following forms are included in the Application Packet and shall be completed and submitted prior to your Admission Conference:

- Admission Agreement
- Cal Elite Kids Registration Form
- Readiness Assessment
- Medical Report Form
- Immunization Record
- Medical Authorization
- Notification of Parents' Rights
- Cal Elite Kids Liability Form
- Credit Card Authorization for Auto Pay

Kindergarteners must be 5 by December 1st 2011.

Academic Calendar

The Preschool Academy operates on a year-round schedule. Students may start at any time of the year.

The Kindergarten Academy operates on a year-round schedule. Students must start at the beginning of September.

Holidays

Our School program is closed 10 days for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Day After (2 days)
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

Days/Hours of Operation

Cal Elite Kids Preschool and Kindergarten Academy is offered Monday - Friday. Preschool students may enroll for any combination of days, providing there is availability. Kindergarten is a full day Kindergarten Monday-Friday.

Program Hours

Preschool Hours

Morning Preschool:	8:45 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.
Afternoon Preschool	12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Full Day Preschool	8:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Preschool Early Care	7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
Extended Care	3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Kindergarten Hours

Kindergarten	8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Early Care	7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
Extended Care	3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Students may enroll in either the morning program, afternoon program full day or Kindergarten program. Students that enroll in Extended day and/or Early Care must pay in advance via our website www.calelitekids.com or through the front desk. You may enroll in one day or one day for the month. All fees must be paid upon departure.

Early Care	\$6/day	\$21.50/day for the month
Extended Care (2 hours)	\$12/day	\$43/day for the month
Extended Care (1 Hour)	\$6/day	\$21.50/day for the month

Children's Schedule

Preschool Schedule will include 5 activities each day. Students will take part in Calendar, Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and two extra curricular activities. Please see list below for the activity schedule. Full day kids will be included in the morning activities and a few extra activities in the afternoon.

Preschool Daily Activities: 25 Minute Activities

Monday:	Gymnastics and Violin
Tuesday:	Soccer and Violin
Wednesday:	Musical Theater and Art
Thursday:	Gymnastics and Art
Friday:	Gymnastics and Spanish

Kindergarten Schedule will include Writing, Reading, Math, Calendar, Centers, Science, Social Studies and one extra curricular activity each day. Please see the list below for the activity schedule.

Kindergarten Daily Activities: One Hour Activities

Monday:	Violin/ Music
Tuesday:	Soccer and Spanish
Wednesday:	Musical Theater
Thursday:	Gymnastics
Friday:	Art

Fees

Tuition

Families are billed via email on a monthly basis. Tuition is due the 25th of every month. **Effective the 2011/ 2012 school year, all students must be set up for auto pay. Please see the auto pay credit card form.**

Registration Fee: \$30 for the first child and \$55 for the family

If payments are not received on time, a \$10 late fee will be assessed. Students whose payments are more than 20 days late may be disenrolled from the program. The Registration Fee and First Payment must be made one week prior to the first day of classes.

The Learning Supply Fee is an annual fee that will be added to your tuition one year from the date you originally paid for it. Preschool Learning Supply Fee is \$40/year and Kindergarten Learning Supply Fee is \$100/year.

Two Big Show Fees: There are two shows that each child will be invited to participate in. Each show will incur a fee to participate and additional fees for spectators. Please know these shows are optional however we encourage each child to participate.

Violin Rental Fee is only charged for students enrolled in Mondays or Tuesdays. The fee is \$15/month or you may purchase your own violin and the fee will not be added to your account. Please see Violin Rental Contract for more details.

Kindergarten may attend field trips throughout the year that will incur an additional fee based on the amount each trip costs. Please be aware that these are optional.

Holidays and Fees

Holidays have already been incorporated into the tuition rates. There are no makeups or credits for Holidays as we have already prorated your yearly tuition for the days we are closed. Your tuition is based on the days per year.

Make Up Policy

We understand that there are times when students are sick or unable to attend class. In an effort to help your child maximize his or her learning experience, Cal Elite Kids offers three (3) make ups per year. If your child has missed a class, please contact our Academic Director or teacher and we will assist you in scheduling a make up provided we have space in the class. Issuing make ups is not a standard practice in the preschool education industry. We feel, however, that consistency in the educational process is important *and* value to the parent is appreciated. If your child misses a class, we urge you to take advantage of the make up policy and schedule a make up day as soon as possible. Make ups are only given out provided our classes are not full. In the event our classes are full we will schedule a makeup in another class Please understand that we cannot issue credits or refunds for absences or holidays. In addition, a school day make up for students who attend full time (e.g. 5 full days per week) is not possible. However, if possible, we will gladly schedule a Saturday make up for the athletic portion of the school day that your child missed. (E.g. we can do a Saturday make up for gymnastics or dance, etc., provided our scheduling allows for it.)

Withdrawal From Program

We require 2 weeks written notice of withdrawal if you are planning to withdraw from Cal Elite Kids completely. However, if you plan to stay within Cal Elite Kids you may receive a credit on your account for the remaining month. If you are planning on withdrawing from the program, please provide us with a written letter informing us of your withdrawal and the last day of attendance.

Illness

A child should not come to school when ill and unable to benefit from the day. Equally important, we want to protect our students, including your child, from unnecessary exposure to infectious diseases. Our health policies are designed to ensure the health, welfare and safety of our students and staff. If your child is not feeling well, *please* do not send him or her to school.

If your child presents any of the following symptoms during the school day, we will isolate your child and call you immediately so that you can arrange for your child to be picked up:

- Temperature over 100 degrees

- Severe cold with fever, sneezing, cough, or nose drainage that manifests infection
- If a child vomits once or has 2 bouts of diarrhea
- If any unidentified rash is noticed on a child, a doctor's note stating that the child is not contagious and is able to return to school will be needed upon return
- Any symptoms resembling conjunctivitis (pink eye)

If your child seems very ill and we are unable to contact you or others listed on your emergency contact form, we will call your pediatrician. In a serious situation, we will call the Orange County Fire Authority for emergency medical assistance. In such emergency situations, a member of our staff will remain with your child until you or someone you designate arrives.

Medication

Cal Elite Kids Preschool and Kindergarten Academy is permitted to administer medication under the following guidelines:

- All prescription medications must be in the prescription bottle labeled with the child's name and dosage.
- All medication must be labeled, accompanied by a completed Medication Form, and secured in our Medicine Box.
- Medication Forms must be completed by a physician for any type of "as needed" medications, such as sun screens, eye drops, etc.
- Our Fax number is (949) 589-1377, if your physician wants to fax over the Medication Forms.
- Some parents find it helpful to ask the pharmacist to split the medication into two labeled prescription bottles; this allows you to leave one bottle at home during the school week.
- We suggest parents keep extra Medication Forms in the glove box of their car for those unexpected doctor's visits.

Accidents

If your child has an accident that results in an injury, our staff will attend to your child's needs. Minor injuries will be dealt with on site and an accident report will be completed. Upon pick up, we will inform you of the accident, the resulting injury, and the treatment provided (e.g. band-aid, ice, rest.)

If your child has an accident that we feel requires immediate attention beyond our simple treatment guidelines, we will call you immediately and arrange for pick up. An accident report will be completed and presented to you at the time of pick up.

If your child has any kind of serious accident, which presents a more serious medical situation, we will contact the Orange County Fire Authority immediately for emergency medical assistance. We will also call you immediately to inform you of the situation. A member of our staff will remain with your child until you or someone you designate arrives. An accident report will be completed and presented to you at the soonest appropriate time.

Arrivals and Departures

Arrival

We ask that you ensure that your child arrives on time each day. We recognize that mornings can get a little busy with a preschooler, but we believe that this is the time that our young students learn principles of timeliness, punctuality and respect for others' and their schedules. Please set an example wherein you and your child have ample time to get to school on time. We try to start our day with an unstructured activity so that if your child not able to arrive on time, he or she can easily assimilate into the activity.

Sign In/Sign Out Policy

You must bring your child into our facility and sign him or her in each day using a full legal signature. Upon departure, you must also sign your child out each day using a full legal signature. You may designate individuals who are authorized to pick your child up. To authorize another to pick up your child, you must complete the "Authorization to Pick Up Form" and submit it to our office. We ask that you also introduce this

individual (or individuals) to our staff. We reserve the right to require picture identification upon a request to pick up your child. We maintain these standards for the safety of our students. Please add anyone that may by any chance pick up your child. If the person is not on the list, we will not send your child home with him or her.

Please inform us of any situation (custodial, court order, etc.) that affects who is or is not authorized to pick up your child. It is imperative that we are kept informed of such situations.

Please sign and date our Sign In/ Sign Out Policy Form.

Departure

It is important for your child and our staff and program that you pick up your child on time each day. We understand that there are unforeseen circumstances that can occasionally interfere with your ability to pick up your child on time. We afford each family 2 late pick up grace periods of up to 10 minutes per trimester. Beginning with the third late pick up, we have no choice but to start enforcing a late pick up penalty of \$1.00 per minute after the first 10 minutes.

Parent Involvement

We believe that parent involvement is crucial to your child's successful education. We recognize that we are here to help you in your greater effort to help your child learn and grow. We are happy to be partnering up with you in this great cause and look forward to helping your child have the best preschool educational experience possible. Here are a few ways that you can be involved in your child's learning at Cal Elite Kids:

- Volunteer time in your child's classroom
- Read with your child at home
- Enforce the things learned in school at home
- Ask your child about school and what she/he learned each day
- Praise your child for his or her accomplishments
- Display your child's work at home and share it with other family members and friends

Behavior Guidance Policy

We believe that busy, interested children seldom have behavior issues. We also believe that children have a need to behave; they are just learning the rules. We treat discipline as an opportunity to guide behavior in positive directions. Our staff set a positive example by treating the children with respect and using positive words and praise to help guide the child. Issues that arise will be dealt with privately with the child, and when necessary, the parent or other staff members. We know that there are many stages in a child's development that bring behaviors that require guidance. This is a part of growing up! We believe that it is our responsibility to provide an environment for our students where it is easy to follow the rules, respect others, and behave well. No physical discipline of any kind is ever used in our facility. If necessary, we may physically restrain a child (hold the child) to prevent him or her from hurting himself or herself or from hurting others. No shaming of a child is ever permitted in our facility. We also do not support the concept of "time out" as we believe that this does not provide the child with the quality of reinforcement and instruction needed to guide the behavior in a timely and effective manner. We also believe that "time outs" subject a child to unnecessary shame and affects the child's status and relationships with his or her peers. Our way is to be positive, fair, honest, direct, sweet, consistent, and timely.

If we encounter a more troubling discipline issue with your child, we will inform you of the situation and discuss how we feel we can deal with the situation in a manner that will be most effective for your child.

While we want to be positive, and caring in the ways that we teach behavior, we cannot allow a situation to exist that presents any kind of threat to another child or staff member. Likewise, a behavior that is destructive to the learning environment of others, and which cannot be controlled, may subject a child to dismissal.

Jewelry

Please, no jewelry! Earrings are fine, as long as they are small stud earrings. Jewelry presents issues when it is lost, misplaced, or taken. More importantly, it presents safety issues in our athletic classes.

Hair

For safety reasons, please make sure that long hair is put up for the day. Please do not use hard barrettes or clamps as they can hurt during our activity classes!

Personal Belongings

With the exception of specially announced activities, please keep all toys and personal belongings at home. Bringing these items to school presents issues for the children and our staff that detract from our planned activities.

Nutrition and Snack

Please ensure that your child eats a healthy breakfast before arriving to school. If your schedule necessitates that your child eats breakfast very early in the morning (more than 1½ hours before school starts) we suggest that you provide your child with a light snack *before* arriving to school.

We break for snack at 10:35 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. each day. Every child should come to school with a nutritious snack to enjoy at this time. *Please provide your child with a nutritious snack each day.* We ask that you strive to include snacks that your child can open and eat independently. Do *not* send in any food that requires cooking or heating. We recommend washable non-plastic water/beverage containers for the children to accompany their snack. (Our favorite are Klean Kanteens at www.kleankanteen.com) Do not send in sticky fruit drinks or sodas that can spill. We recommend the following foods for snack: fresh fruit, crackers, string cheese, granola bars, raisins, yogurt in the tube form (Go-gurt), carrot sticks, celery, sandwiches, etc. *Please avoid peanut butter as it presents severe allergy problems for some children.*

First Day of School

What to bring on the first day of school?

AM/PM Preschool students will need to bring a peanut free snack and an extra set of clothes that must stay in your child's bag/backpack at all times

Full Day and Kindergarten Students will need to bring in two peanut free snacks and a peanut free lunch. We also require these students to leave an extra set of clothes in their bag as well as sleeping gear. Sleeping gear consists one that covers their mat and themselves. You may purchase nap bags in the Elite Boutique.

Thank You!

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be a part of your child's life. The preschool and kindergarten years are wonderful, important, and delightful. We are excited about helping your child to discover and experience all of the wonder and joy of learning! We know that your child means the world to you and we understand and embrace the importance of our work.