



FORZA Child Development Center

Parent Handbook

2014 -2015

**The Staff of the FORZA CDC and GCCAS, along with the FORZA Education Management Team, are pleased to greet you and your children!
Welcome to the FORZA/GCCAS Family!**

**215 Airport Road North
Naples, Florida 34104**

**239-64FORZA
239-784-1539
www.gccas.org**

Table of Contents

Special Notes from the Management Team and Director.....	3
Mission Statement.....	4
Philosophy.....	4
Curriculum.....	4
Hours of Operation.....	6
Enrollment Documentation.....	6
Registration/Tuition.....	6
Pick Up/Drop Off Procedures.....	6
Release of Children Policy.....	7
Sick/Vacation Time.....	7
Illnesses/Allergies.....	8
Medication Policy.....	8
Cell Phone Safeguards.....	8
Attire.....	9
Safety.....	9
Staff.....	9
Assessments.....	10
Discipline.....	10
Snacks.....	10
Rest Periods.....	11
Birthdays.....	11
Parent Volunteers.....	11
Open Door Policy.....	11
Withdraw/Termination.....	11
School Closings.....	12
Items from Home.....	12
Parent Communications.....	13

A Note from the FORZA Education Management Team

On behalf of the FORZA Education Management Team, we want to extend a very warm welcome to you and your child as members of our FORZA/GCCAS family. We are anticipating an incredible and exciting year at the FORZA Child Development Center. We know your child will have a unique and holistic learning experience here -- full of discovery, excitement, wonder, and learning at an optimum level in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

FORZA Education Management was founded on the principle of giving parents a choice for their child's education and the children of today a chance to be successful. We believe that all children can and will learn if given a chance. FORZA provides quality education choices for parents and students based on individual student needs.

We hope that you will become involved in your child's experiences at the FORZA Child Development Center and enjoy the many exciting milestones that your child will reach. Our Preschool Director, Misty Doyle, and Preschool staff has developed unique and meaningful learning experiences based on a sound and researched based curriculum entitled, "Early Literacy and Learning Model/Plus."

This handbook offers information that should answer most of your questions. However, do not hesitate to contact our Director and/or Preschool Staff if you need further clarification.

Your child will experience a learning environment that will produce memories that will last a lifetime!

The FORZA Education Management Team

A Note from the FORZA Child Development Director

I am looking forward to the partnership between FORZA Child Development Center and your family. As parents, you are the first and most important teacher in your child's life. Thank you for trusting us to help mold your child into the best person he/she can be.

We will work with your child's individual abilities, talents and challenges to help your child grow socially, academically, physically and emotionally. This is an exciting time for your child and family. Thank you again for letting us be a part of your child's most formative years.

With Great Expectations!
Misty Doyle

Mission Statement

The Mission of the FORZA Child Development Center is to foster pride in reaching age appropriate milestones for all preschool students in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Moreover, will make a concerted effort to provide learning opportunities and meaningful experiences that will result in every child entering school ready to learn, ready to read, and ready to succeed. We strive to provide the students with an environment to learn and be successful in a safe and orderly school.

Philosophy

Our primary goal is to assist parents with the development of their child via a Holistic Approach to the Total Child in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Our process of development is centralized in a safe, secure and stimulating environment where nurturing, learning, exploring, and enrichment are integral components.

This developmental process:

- * Provides individualized attention.
- * Offers cognitive, recreational, creative cultural activities, which are varied - both planned and spontaneous.
- * Encourages creativity and exploration.
- * Perpetuates progressive self-concept, self-esteem, self-expression, self-direction and self-reliance.
- * Offers a wide range of experiences to aid in the age-appropriate development of gross and fine motor skills, language skills and communications skills.
- * Affords developmental continuity.
- * Includes enrichment resources, enrichment staff and enrichment experiences.

Curriculum

The Early Literacy and Learning Model/Plus (ELLM/Plus) is a research-based, comprehensive curriculum for 3 and 4 year old preschool children that has been proven to be effective improving children's early reading achievement in an experimental study. The literacy-focused curriculum builds children's cognitive development through literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, motor experiences, and physical health. Children's acquisition of important cognitive and social/emotional development is facilitated through interactions with supportive teachers and other adults who encourage children's curiosity, persistence, and creativity by planning and implementing engaging activities and providing support during learning experiences. ELLM/Plus is designed to expand children's vocabularies and refine their understanding and comprehension of words they know and use. Moreover, STEM age appropriate activities will be introduced to the child fostering an appreciation for an interdisciplinary approach of learning Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. The ultimate goal of this curriculum is that every child enters school ready to learn, ready to read, and ready to succeed.

Our protocol for development is centralized in a safe, secure and stimulating environment where nurturing, learning, exploring and enrichment are integral components of the process. Only developmentally appropriate materials, equipment and activities are used to project the concepts and skills of each age-level.

Our curriculum reflects the developmental approach to teaching which supports our philosophy that children learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Emphasis is on simple tasks, which motivate children to become successful, confident and life long learners.

The VPK Program is also presented during the Child Development Center's wrap around program. The State of Florida-funded Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program prepares Florida's children for a successful Elementary School experience, focusing on early language and literacy. This program prepares four year-olds (child must be 4 on or before September 1st) for Kindergarten, building a strong foundation for lifelong educational success. Classrooms are arranged into defined learning areas and structured settings with learning domains taught by highly trained and educated teachers. Curriculum coincides with FORZA CDC's philosophy, wherein the development of the TOTAL CHILD is the focus. Children in VPK not only develop skills in language, literacy, mathematics, science and social studies, but also creativity, listening, self-esteem, self-control, responsibility, and cognitive, social, emotional, physical and creative development. The eight domains of learning used in VPK are:

• Physical Health • Approaches to Learning • Social and Emotional Development • Language and Communication • Emergent Literacy • Mathematical and Scientific Thinking • Social Studies and The Arts • Motor Development.

Children who participate in VPK score higher on school-readiness tests, develop better language skills, acquire better social skills, experience fewer behavioral issues and are thoroughly prepared for Kindergarten. The benefits of the Florida Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program truly promote a lifelong love of learning!

Child Development Center's Character Training Values

Each month the FORZA Child Development Center will focus on the following character training values. In the classroom, this can be achieved through discussions at circle time, role-play, music, and stories. At home and while traveling in the car, you can discuss these character traits as you discuss the day's events, situations that arise with siblings, and so forth.

September: Respect - Courtesy and Awareness; Attentiveness - Listening and Thoughtfulness

October: Sharing - Generosity and Charity; Self-control - Moderation and Prudence

November: Thankfulness - Appreciation and Gratitude; Responsibility - Trustworthiness and Dependability

December: Joyfulness - Cheer and Optimism; Wisdom - Good judgment and Prudence

January: Caring - Sympathy and Compassion; Patience - Persistence and Diligence

February: Love - Gentleness and Empathy; Honesty - Integrity and Truthfulness

March: Kindness - Tenderheartedness and Consideration; Forgiveness - Understanding and Pardoning

April: Courage - Bravery and Determination; Tolerance - Fairness and Justice

May: Helpfulness - Support and Understanding; Perseverance - Endurance and Prioritizing

June: Politeness - Manners and Courtesy; Neatness - Organization and Cleanliness

July: Citizenship - Patriotism and Honor; Loyalty - Faithfulness and Dedication

August: Cooperation - Teamwork; Sportsmanship - Initiative, Creativity and Motivation

FORZA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The FORZA Child Development Center is a year-round, privately owned preschool education center for children ages 3 and 4 years old, and housed within Gulf Coast Charter Academy South. We are open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm. We request that all children arrive at the school no later than 8:30 a.m. FORZA Child Development Center promotes a developmentally appropriate program, which follows a sequence of specific daily activities that are scheduled to start at 8:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The faculty, plan both structured and informational activities daily; therefore, when there are late arrivals, this disrupts the educational process.

FORZA Child Development Center remains open until 6:00 p.m. After this time late charges apply (a late charge of \$1.00 per minute, due at pick-up, will be assessed for anyone arriving late with the minimum charge being \$5.00). If you are going to be late please give us a call.

Enrollment

When enrolling into FORZA Child Development Center, you will need to provide us with a current immunization record (blue form). The state of Florida requires every child to be up-to-date on annual physicals (yellow form). These two forms must be original documents and can be obtained from your child's pediatrician. Updated shot records and physical forms are required to continue attendance. We will check records monthly and give you a reminder if you need new documentation. All agreement papers that are given to you in the enrollment package need to be signed and are due at enrollment. If applicable, we will need a copy of any court orders dealing with your child's custody. The above must be submitted before your child is permitted to attend.

Registration

The registration fee must be paid for your child to be officially enrolled into FORZA Child Development Center. There is no supply fee, however, there is a list of supplies that the parents of each child must send into school.

Tuition Payments

Tuition payments are due in advance by the Monday of each week. If we do not receive payment within five days of the payment date, a late fee of \$30.00 may be assessed for each week the payment is tardy. Tuition can be made via automatic withdrawal, debit card, checks or cash. Checks are made out to FORZA.

NSF Checks

If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, a fee of \$30.00 will be assessed. This covers the bank handling fees. If this occurs twice, you must pay your tuition by money order, cash or credit card.

Pick Up/Drop Off

When dropping off your child, please be sure to sign in. Please sign in each day. After signing in and going to your child's classroom, please be sure to notify the teacher so she will be aware of your child's arrival. Your children's personal belongings will go into their cubbies or backpack.

When picking up your child, please sign him/her out in the front and go into the classroom to pick up both your child and his or her belongings. Once the classroom teacher has released your child to your care, please be sure your child stays with you – even if you have another child in the school to pick up. **Please do not let them go to the front reception area or another classroom to wait for you, unattended. Once your child has been released to you, it is your responsibility to see to their safe dismissal from the school property.**

Release of Children Policy

When you enroll your child into FORZA Child Development Center, you will receive a pick-up authorization form. This form notifies us with the names of those whom you allow to pick up your child. Your child will not be released to anyone whose name does not appear on your list. When an authorized person comes to pick up your child, he or she must show us a valid driver's license or photo identification (please share this information with your family if they are going to be picking up your child). If there are custody issues, court ordered documentation must be provided.

FORZA Child Development Center reserves the right to refuse to release any child to an impaired individual. If either the parents or authorized individuals seem impaired either physically or emotionally, and/or the Director or staff members feel that the child is at risk, the child will not be released. In this event, an authorized individual on the emergency contact list will be called. If we cannot reach any of the persons on the list, the Department of Children and Families will be notified.

Sick/Vacation

Each family is entitled to 2 weeks of vacation within a year. A reservation fee of 50% of the normal tuition rate plus a written intent to make use of the vacation week/s is required to hold your child's place in the Child Development Center. If your child is home sick or there is a school holiday, you are responsible for a full week of tuition as our staff is here and being paid and we are holding a place for your child. Communication with the center director is imperative when your child is sick or absent.

Illnesses

For the protection of all children and staff, children should not be brought to the FORZA Child Development Center when they are ill. Please do not send your child to the school if your child is displaying one or more of the following symptoms:

Fever: A child with a temperature of 100 degrees or more needs to be picked up within an hour and kept at home until he or she is fever-free for 24 hours.

Diarrhea/Vomiting: A child with diarrhea or one who has vomited, needs to be picked up within an hour and should remain at home for 24 hours after symptoms clear.

Colds/Ear, Eye or Nasal Discharge: A child with eye discharge should be checked for conjunctivitis. Runny noses are a common occurrence among children; however, if a cold is severe -- the mucus from the child's nose is thick and/or greenish, if the child has a bad cough, or if your child is lethargic or not feeling well, please keep the child at home until symptoms subside.

Highly Contagious Diseases: If your child has contracted or has been exposed to a highly contagious illness, please inform the office immediately of the condition. The checkout book in the front office posts a class exposure notice. This will alert you of symptoms to watch for in your child. Highly contagious illnesses or conditions include: strep throat, pinworms, measles,

mumps, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, lice, scabies, whooping cough, impetigo, meningitis, hepatitis A, salmonellas, shigellosis, or scarlet fever. The FORZA Child Development Center does require a physician's note before returning to school after a bout with any contagious illnesses or conditions.

Antibiotics: A child on antibiotics should be kept at home at least 24 hours after the first dose to allow the medicine to work on the condition. When a child becomes ill during the school day, we will separate him or her from the other children and contact a parent with the request that the child be taken home. Please pick up your child within an hour of our call. We will call the next emergency contact on the registration form if a child is not picked up within this timeframe or we cannot reach the parents.

Health and Allergies

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the Director, **in writing**, regarding food allergies, asthmatic conditions, insect allergies or any other physical or health condition diagnosed by a physician and critical to providing the child with proper care. If there is a special circumstance regarding your child's care (i.e., special food and/or lunch required at a certain time), please be sure to let the Director know or leave them a note. Some of the children in our school are allergic to peanuts, please do not bring food items to school for your child (i.e., "breakfast bars," cereal, cupcakes, etc.) that have peanuts on/in them. Although we encourage the children not to share food items, kids will be kids and they may attempt to share. Please do not bring any items to school with nuts. Teachers can get very busy attending to children during the busy drop-off and pick up times and it can be difficult to remember specific details regarding a child's needs which are not within their usual routine. A written note regarding special food circumstances is imperative.

Medication

Medication will be kept in the Director's office. If your child needs to have medication administered, please notify the Director, Office Manager, and your child's teacher. You must sign a medication form authorizing us to administer the medication. If the form is not signed, FORZA Child Development Center will not be able to administer any medication. *The medication must also be in its original bottle and/or box with the child's name, current date, doctor's name and dosage amount printed on the label.* Medications shown to cause excessive drowsiness will not be given at school. Medicine must be taken by mouth only. FORZA Child Development Center does not administer vitamins or diet supplements, as these are not considered medicine. At the end of the day, you may check back with the office to see the medication verification log, where the time, dosage amount given, and the staff's initials will be kept.

Cell Phones/Safeguards

Please turn off your cell phone as soon as you enter the parking lot of FORZA Child Development Center. Please be aware our parking lot can be a busy place; please watch closely for children and parents as you enter and exit the property. Please do not leave other children in the car as you pick up your FORZA Child Development Center student. Remember cars need to be turned off, never left running without a driver, in the parking lot! The children, staff and other families need your complete attention when on the premises of the school.

Attire

We set attire guidelines to protect your child. Please send your child to school in rubber-soled shoes such as sneakers or tennis shoes. Please do not dress your child in open-toe sandals since mulch can get stuck in sandals and cause splinters. Footwear such as flip-flops, “jelly” shoes, or shoes with more than a half inch heel are unsafe and inappropriate for school. Children will be running, jumping and climbing while at school. A child wearing flimsy or ill-fitting shoes runs the risk of a sprain or fracture while engaging in normal physical activities. Proper footwear helps the feet and ankles of a small child to develop properly if worn consistently.

Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. If it is hot, please do not send your child to school in long sleeves. During cold weather, we request that you bring in a jacket. When dressing smaller children, please do not put small barrettes in their hair. Said items can be a choking hazard to all children. Keep in mind that we have daily art projects and outdoor play and this means that life can get a little messy! All of the paint we use is washable, however, we ask that you do not dress your children in their favorite outfit. Do not send your child to school wearing any type of jewelry, as the school cannot be responsible for loss or damage. Earrings and necklaces present a potential danger of getting caught on something or accidentally pulled on by another child.

We may at some point in the future design FORZA Child Development Center uniform shirts. If this is done, the purchase of said uniform shirt would be optional this year.

Safety

The safety of your children is of utmost importance. We take every precaution to make sure that your child’s safety and security needs are met. The only way anyone may enter the building is through the front entryway, which is an automatic locked door. Each family will be issued a door code for entry. **It is imperative for the children’s safety, that you do not share your door code with anyone.** Guests that enter will be required to show a photo ID if the staff does not immediately recognize him or her. In the event of an evacuation emergency, there are pre-planned posted exits from each classroom.

FORZA Child Development Center Staff

We are committed to providing your child with the best possible qualified teachers. All staff members are carefully screened (criminal and background checks, fingerprints, reference checks, etc.), and are required to meet all state and local requirements in order to work with young children. They are selected for their educational background, experience and training in working with children, and their ability to show genuine care and affection in helping children to develop into confident, happy, and well adjusted individuals. All teachers are trained in identifying child abuse and have taken (or are in the process of taking) a 45 - hour Childcare Certification class. We encourage our staff to further their education and achieve 600 hours of childcare training by earning a CDA (Child Development Associate certificate)/Staff Credential. FORZA Child Development Center provides an enriching and positive environment for both teachers and children so that there is a harmonious balance of safety and fun in an ambience conducive to learning.

Assessment

Our program embraces the individuality of each child by promoting a unique learning experience; each child is encouraged to develop at his or her own pace and the progress of each child is gauged on a periodic basis. Currently, we utilize the national developmental screening tool “Ages & Stages Questionnaire,” which is recommended by the State of Florida. Through the “Ages & Stages Questionnaire”(“ASQ,”) assessment we can adjust your child’s’ daily activities in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains by enhancing his or her development in fine motor skills, gross motor skills, problem solving skills, communication and social/emotional development. If there is a concern regarding your child’s development, we will administer an “ASQ,” and share the results of the questionnaire with you along with follow-up activities as needed. We foster open communication with the children as well as the parents. Together, we will achieve the appropriate academic and developmental levels of each individual child.

Discipline Policy: Redirection

The purpose of redirection is to help a child learn which behaviors are acceptable and appropriate in a given situation. Our job is to be the “guiders” and set limits as well as help steer the children into making the right decision. Children need to know that they are loved and feel secure in their surroundings. Our staff will model self-control and help the children learn the various ways in which they can express themselves effectively. This is an ongoing active learning process. Our job is to teach the children ways of communicating and build their desire to get along with their peers.

We use positive reinforcement to encourage positive behavior. We will provide redirection choices in all situations. Positive reinforcement and redirection consists of encouraging self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation. We view discipline as a potential for learning. No form of punishment is used at FORZA Child Development Center. In a situation where the child’s behavior is out of control, the teacher will remove the child to a quiet area of the room or sometimes outside of the classroom maintaining supervision. This allows the child to calm down and gain self-control of his/her emotions. Our teachers will explain why the behavior is unacceptable and what the child must do in order to return to the class. A hug coupled with encouraging words will reassure the child that he/she can try again and be successful.

Preschool children are in their formative years of development. An important part of any child’s education includes training in getting along with others, respect for authority and encouraging the child to willingly participate and follow reasonable rules designed for his/her safety.

The faculty will create a positive learning environment by establishing simple and reasonable rules. They will be consistent in enforcing rules and will redirect inappropriate behavior. All faculty and staff will maintain a calm, positive demeanor towards your child, will use “quiet time,” as a calming technique as opposed to a form of punishment

Snacks

Afternoon snacks are included in the tuition and are served after naptime around 3:00 p.m. However, children must bring a bag lunch daily. If your child’s lunch requires refrigeration, please include a “cold pack” in the lunch bag to preserve freshness. We cannot heat meals. *[Dietary note: Please note that candy, gum, soft drinks, etc., are not allowed at school. Thank you!]*

Rest Periods

The FORZA Child Development Center students will enjoy a nap/rest period each day. A small blanket (no larger than 48" by 60") should be kept at the school Monday through Friday. Said blanket, must be taken home and laundered on Friday. Please do not send in pillows.

Birthdays

We welcome the celebration of your child's birthday at school. Parents are welcome to send in or bring special food for their child's birthday or even organize some sort of special brief activity (cupcakes are preferred over sheet cakes). For an activity, please check with the Director at least one week in advance to discuss and schedule an appropriate time during the day. Please note that home (off-premises) birthday party invitations may be handed out at school if the ENTIRE class is invited, otherwise we ask that you mail your invitations. *[Dietary note: Please remember not to bring peanuts or any food items, which contain peanuts.]*

Parent Volunteers

At FORZA Child Development Center, we like to get to know each and every individual family. Throughout the year, your child's teacher will present opportunities for you to become actively involved. Do you have a special talent and job that would be of interest to the children? Would you like to be a "Mystery Reader" in your child's class? Please be sure to consult with your child's teacher enabling us to arrange your active involvement. The children love to see their parents helping out at school!

Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time -- announced or unannounced! If you have a bit of spare time, please drop by. We may even put you to work!

Withdrawal

FORZA Child Development Center requires a written, two (2) week notice of attendance termination. If you fail to provide a written two-week notice, you will be held responsible for two weeks payment. In the event that you withdraw and there is an unpaid balance remaining on your account, we will take the appropriate legal action to recover the outstanding balance.

Termination Policy

FORZA Child Development Center reserves the right to discontinue the care of any child. The decision will be well thought out and based on the best interest of the child, staff members, and/or other students. Before termination occurs, a parent consultation will be held, and/or "Behavior Reports," will be provided to you so that we can work together as a team to discuss and resolve any problems. However, if solutions are ineffective, the school will terminate the child's enrollment. Termination may result from: disruptive behavior, violation of policies, abuse of staff, children or property; non-payment of tuition; or the school's inability to provide the care necessary for the child. If such a termination arises and money is still owed, you are still responsible.

School Closings

Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, "Good" Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day (4th of July).

If any holiday falls on a Sunday, then we are closed Monday. If any holiday falls on a Saturday, then we are closed on Friday. Moreover, If Collier County Schools are closed due to impending bad weather/hurricanes, FORZA Child Development Center will also be closed.

Labeling

Please remember that your child needs spare clothes. Please make sure you have at least two outfits at school and that they are stored in a clear, zip lock bag with your child's name clearly indicated on the bag. Make sure you label everything with your child's name that you want returned. **Labels should be the first name and last name initial.** Please label all clothing and bedding with a permanent marker, laundry pen, adhesive or sewn-in label to identify your child's belongings.

Toys

Personal toys are not allowed at FORZA Child Development Center. The school has a variety of toys, blocks, and manipulatives that are designed to challenge, instruct and provide opportunity for social interaction.

Parent Communication

At FORZA Child Development Center, we recognize the importance of parent involvement in their child's growth and development. Our open door policy allows you to chat briefly and spontaneously with the Director or Office Manager about any concerns you might have concerning your child at school and we expect you to communicate to the Director and/or staff members about any concerns you may have for your child and their educational experience at FORZA Child Development Center. For parent/teacher or parent/director conferences, we do ask that you schedule an appointment in order to insure that the staff member is free from classroom responsibilities when you arrive. Periodic conferences to discuss your child's progress are recommended. Please know that every member of the staff is here to serve you. Moreover, please let us know of any concerns or problems you might have. Usually most worries can be solved with a discussion or a note to the teacher; however, if an issue requires further attention, the Director, via a scheduled appointment, will be available to listen to your concerns. If an issue is important to you, it is important to us. Don't forget to check the bulletin boards in the entrance of the school for other important reminders and/or pertinent information (i.e., school events, product recalls, helpful hints, fun websites and/or information web links, etc.).

Accident Reports

Unfortunately, occasional accidents do happen. If an accident does occur, action will be taken immediately. Moreover, an accident form will be written up to notify you of what occurred and what action was taken. The Director will sign the form and review the accident with the child and staff member. You will be asked to sign the form and return it to indicate you have read said notification.

Monthly Newsletter

We will send home a monthly newsletter to inform you of what is going on at FORZA Child Development Center. We will alert you of upcoming events, what your child will be learning, etc. We hope that you will be sure to pick up this newsletter and read it every month. This is just one of the ways that we will communicate with you. The newsletter will be provided in your child's communication folder, but if yours happens to become misplaced, there will be spare copies at the office and on the GCCAS website (www.gccas.org).

Daily Information Sheets

FORZA Child Development Center parents are provided with an information sheet each day. This sheet summarizes your child's activities and includes important information about daily activities, eating, upcoming events, etc.

Suggestions

We welcome your suggestions! If you have an idea that would benefit the FORZA Child Development Center and our school environment, please contact the Director.