

The ABA Academy, Inc.

2018-2019 Parent Handbook

7555 Claxstrauss Dr

Sarasota Fl 34240

941- 341-9992 (Phone)

941-341-9998 (Fax)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

The Student and Family Handbook has been developed to help student, families and administrators understand policies and procedures established for students. The document is now online only and parents must sign and attest they have read it in its entirety prior to registration.

Our Calendar:

The ABA Academy follows a 209 day school year. Our days are shorter so that our school year can be longer. We have made this amended calendar because we have found students do their best in the morning and need consistency and routine through the summer months. School hours are dependent on student grade and are listed below in the Drop Off Pick Up section of this handbook.

Our Students and Placement:

The ABA Academy begins working with children at age 3 and will service adults up to age 22. Students will be assigned a classroom based on their chronological age, even if they are working on different skills, however each student will have an individualized education plan with educational and behavior goals specific to that child. Classroom placement is at the discretion of the school Directors and BCBA's.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

The ABA Academy admits students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to its students. It does not discriminate on the basis of a student's or prospective student's family's race, religion, cultural heritage, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs.

Enrollment:

The following is required to enroll a student in The ABA Academy, Inc. Please note that the student may not attend class until all documents and fees are received.

- A certified birth certificate, which may be requested online from your birth state's health department.
- A Florida Certificate of Immunization, Form 680 (blue card), completed by a Florida physician or by a Florida county health department or letter of exemption.
- Florida Statute §1003.22 requires any child entering a Florida school for the first time to present documentation of a physical examination performed within one year prior to enrollment (registration date). This exam must include a review of all body systems (heart, skin, respiratory, etc.) performed by a licensed medical provider. The exam should indicate any condition which would warrant special considerations for the student at school. The physical exam form must be readable (health department personnel can only accept exams in English), signed, dated and stamped by the provider, practicing physician or the county public health department.
- Students transferring from a public school need to submit a notarized affidavit if they are utilizing The McKay Scholarship
- The private school registration form

- Emergency Contact Forms- The ABA Academy requires an emergency contact form with at least 3 contacts. If there is an issue with your child in any way the staff will call down the order of the people listed. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the office of any changes of address, phone number, or email.

- Signature Page attesting that you have read this handbook
- Copy of most recent IEP and FBA if applicable
- \$450 annual registration fee

Scholarships Accepted:

The ABA Academy is happy to accept both the McKay and Gardiner Scholarships to apply towards student tuition.

1. McKay Scholarship - McKay Scholarship Toll-Free Information Hotline: 1-800-447-1636

The McKay Scholarship program is offered through the Florida Department of Education. Information about the McKay Scholarship Choice option is also given to parents when an IEP or a 504 Plan for their child is discussed. This program allows eligible students with an Individualized Education Plan IEP or a 504 Accommodation Plan the opportunity to select a placement in a private school or selected public and charter schools.

McKay Scholarships are distributed 4 times a school year. They are sent directly to the school and parents must sign checks within 7 days of arrival. Office Admin will send an parent email to notify you that they have arrived. If tuition checks are not signed within the 7 day period the student will not be permitted to return to school and parents may be charged out of pocket.

2. Gardiner Scholarship

The ABA Academy also accepts The Gardiner Scholarship. Parents should apply and be approved prior to enrollment. Parents are responsible for providing the school with their child's student ID number as well as approving the quarterly scholarship payments of the scholarship online. You will receive an email from our office admin when it is time and this must be done within 7 days. If parents do not go online and approve their scholarships funds, they will be charged out of pocket or their child may not be permitted to return to school. The Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFO) listed below are approved to administer the Gardiner Scholarship Program. Contact the SFO for instructions and deadlines for applying for a scholarship.

A.A.A. Scholarship Foundation

Phone: 888-707-2465

info@aaascholarships.org

Step Up for Students

Phone: 877-735-7837

info@stepupforstudents.org

The amount of a child's scholarship is dependent on a number of different factors, including grade level, county of residence and a student's individual level of need.

Parents may learn more about the options for their child by visiting the Florida Department of Education website at www.fldoe.org, the school district website.

Parents are responsible for the full amount of their child's tuition regardless of a scholarship.

Enrollment Process

1. Schedule a tour with our Director Shelly Swift.
2. Submit a non-refundable \$100 application fee with the behavior history form and emergency contact form. Please also submit your child's current IEP and FBA.

3. Schedule a trial day from 9 am -11 pm with one of our BCBA's. They will observe your child and determine if your child is accepted into the program and appropriate classroom placement.
4. Complete registration packet and submit all necessary paperwork and registration fees.

Tuition Fees

Annual Non-refundable Registration Fee- \$450

McKay Scholarship Students

251/252- \$11,500
253- \$15,250
254-\$19,800
255- \$26,000

PLSA/Gardiner Scholarship

\$14,000

Our school is year round with a winter, spring, and two summer breaks. Year long attendance is mandatory. Parents are responsible for any tuition amount above what their scholarship amount is. Tuition is due by the 1st of each month and is spread over the 12 months of the year.

Late Fees

If your tuition payment is not made within 7 days, a penalty charge of \$50.00 is imposed. Any tuition unpaid after the 7 day grace period will result in your child being denied admission to class until all overdue tuition and the \$50 penalty are paid.

If tuition remains unpaid after the last day of the month for which it is due, late tuition, all surcharges, and the remainder of the year's tuition, in advance, must be paid for readmission of your child.

There will also be a late fee imposed for any student who is not picked up by 1:00. Late fees in this circumstance will be accrued at \$1 per minute. Please see #10 below.

Any student who has a balance at the end of the school year will be ineligible for re-enrollment and school records would not be released until all fees including late fees have been paid.

Exceptional Circumstances

If unforeseen circumstances make payment on schedule difficult, the parents involved are urged to contact the school director before payment delinquencies occur. A mutually acceptable alternate payment schedule may then be arranged.

Payments

All payments to the school must be in the form of a check or money order, made payable to The ABA Academy, Inc. *No cash payment will be accepted.* Tuition is due on the 1st of every month and should be placed in the blue box in the lobby. If payment has not been received within 7 days of that date, a \$50 dollar late fee will be applied, and your child will not be able attend school until the balance has been paid in full.

Checks must clearly indicate their purpose (example: "Brian - May tuition" or "Brian – Aftercare"). Please put your child's name on the check. If your child has a different last name from that of the person writing the check, please put both the child's first and last name on the check.

A penalty of \$50 will be charged for each check returned for insufficient funds. If parents fail to pay for services rendered and collection efforts become necessary, parent agrees to be responsible for all collection costs incurred, including, but not limited to, reasonable collection fees added by a third party to the original or referral balance. You are hereby notified that a negative report on your credit record may be submitted to a credit reporting agency if you fail to meet the terms of your credit obligations.

Parents may choose to pay by credit card through the front office. If you are interested in paying by credit card you can set up automatic payments. Payments made by credit card will not be discounted and will be charged an additional 4% of costs.

Payment Questions

Your financial dealings with The ABA Academy are treated with confidentiality. Only those individuals with a need to know are privy to individual financial information. Accordingly, your child's teacher will usually not be able to answer specific, individual questions in this area. Such questions should be submitted in writing, in a sealed envelope marked "Attention: Adam Swift".

Our Consultants:

Each classroom has a Board Certified Behavior Analyst or Board Certified Associate Behavior Analyst overseeing curriculum and monitoring student progress. The consultant is responsible for supporting teachers in the classroom and assuring that students hit goals in a timely manner. Parents concerned about student progress may request a meeting with the consultant at any time to review graphs and data.

Our Teachers:

The ABA Academy employs lead teachers who hold either a certification through the State of Florida and/or a Registered Behavior Technician credential, or are acquiring supervision for the Behavior Analysis Certification Board. Our teachers are given extensive training specific to the learning styles of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Because our school believes in a team approach, teachers work collaboratively with the school's BCBA's and other team members. Collaboration among professionals is key to our teaching model. We also have several interns who are working towards hours to become certified in behavior analysis. Our teachers and all staff must adhere to the ethical standards of the behavior analysis certification board and therefore are prohibited from entering an outside relationship with a family in terms of babysitting etc.

Standards of Ethical Conduct

All of the ABA Academy staff is obliged to adhere to the ethical standards set for by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board

Parents' Right to Know

Parents have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of classroom teachers, therapists, and paraprofessionals who provide instruction and work with their child. Requests for information regarding teacher, therapists and paraprofessional qualifications should be presented in writing to the school. The school will provide the requested information to the parent in a timely manner.

Parental Involvement

All parents are encouraged to become involved in the education of their children. The role of a parent is vital to the success of his or her child's education. Research reveals that high student achievement, self-esteem, positive attitudes, better behavior and motivation to do well in school are closely related to positive parental involvement in education. As a result, students

whose parents are involved and supportive tend to make more progress and maintain it, have better attendance, and receive higher grades.

Volunteer Hours

We rely on our ABA Academy family of staff and parents to support the school. We hold several fundraisers and events per year to bring income into the school so that we may maintain our low student/teacher ratios. Each family of The ABA Academy is required to complete 5 volunteer hours per school year. These hours do not have to be in person or on campus. The following is a list of approved volunteer hours.

- Submitting Box Tops
- Help Teachers with material prep
- Attend a fundraising event
- Acquire in kind or monetary donations from local businesses

Attendance

School attendance is the responsibility of the parent and the student. There is a strong relationship between attendance and academic performance. Florida Statute §1003.24 states that the parent/legal guardian of a child of compulsory age is responsible for the child's daily school attendance. School staff, parents, students and state agencies are expected to work together to ensure that all applicable school attendance laws are obeyed, including but not limited to referral to the state-designated agency for possible court action for truancy.

Students are expected to be on time and in school for the whole day. Arrival time is from 8:30-8:45 and students who arrive past this time will not be admitted. We aim to minimize disruption and teachers will be unavailable for students arriving past 8:45.

All absences are considered unexcused until the school receives written explanation from the parent/guardian within three days of the absence. The principal or designee has the authority to determine whether or not an absence is excused. Excessive excused absences for illness may result in the student being required to provide a doctor's note or other substantiating medical evidence.

Excused Absences

- Student illness (if documented by parent/guardian or medical doctor)
- Observance of a religious holiday or service that is recognized as such by members of the student's faith
- Medical appointment with documentation
- Death in the family
- Subpoena by law enforcement agency or mandatory court appearance
- Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student, as determined and approved by the principal or principal's designee

Absence Reports

- Absences should be reported in accordance with school policy and documented by a written note.
- The report must come from a parent/guardian or a physician and give the date(s) of the absence and the reason for it.
- These absence reports must be submitted within three days following the absences, although school principals may make exceptions in cases of need.
- **Parents may be asked to provide written medical documentation when excused absences for illness are excessive. Over nine absences for illness per semester or eighteen for illness in a school year is considered excessive.**

Early Dismissal/Late Arrival

The school should be notified as soon as possible if a student needs an early dismissal or arrives late. Parents should notify the front office in the circumstances.

Withdrawals

- If a student moves or must withdraw from school during the school year, parents/guardians should notify the office and fill out a 30 Day Notice of Withdrawal Enrollment Modification Form. The school will provide a withdrawal form for the student. When the completed form is returned to the office, and all fees or fines are satisfied, the office will complete the withdrawal process. It is our goal to make your child's transition as smooth as possible and we are happy to discuss their IEP and behavior goals with your new team of professionals.

Parent Concerns

Any questions or concerns about student progress should be resolved with your child's teacher. Upon request, teachers will schedule a private conference with parents who would like to discuss an issue concerning their child. If the matter is not resolved to the parents' satisfaction in such a conference, the parents should then request a meeting with the teacher and BCBA. If there still has not been a resolution parents should then meet with the Administrative Director of the school.

Any matters remaining unresolved at this stage will be referred to the appropriate Board Committee (Education, Finance, House, Health and Safety) by Shelly Swift. At the committee level, Board officers are involved.

Any matters unresolved in committee, may be brought to a full meeting of the Board. This forum is typically used to resolve issues of general concern to the School. For this reason, the private concerns of individual parents are treated with confidentiality and not discussed in open Board meetings unless the parents involved so request.

Penalties for Late Pick-up of Children

You must pick up your child at the close of class, after which time penalty charges will be assessed.

Fines will be imposed for late pick-ups on the following basis:

There will be a charge of \$1 for every minute that you are late picking up your child, after a grace period of five minutes.

Fines must be paid within one week of receiving the late pick-ups fine notification. Nonpayment of the fine after one week will result in your child being denied admittance to class until payment is made.

Five instances of late pick-ups in a school year will result in your child being denied continued attendance at The ABA Academy, Inc.

Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Your cooperation in complying with these simple rules for delivery and pick-up of children will enable us to ensure their safety.

GREEN PURPLE BLUE YELLOW AND ORANGE ROOMS-

School hours are 8:30-1

Please have your child at the school on time so none of the session is missed. Our school day begins at 8:30. The front door of the school will automatically be unlocked during arrival and dismissal times. Due to the disruption that occurs when a classrooms session is interrupted, if your child arrives after 8:45 a.m., you will be given a tardy slip. In the event that you are arriving any time outside arrival or dismissal please knock on the door to avoid the doorbell ringing throughout the school.

RED ROOM

School Hours are 9-1

Please have your child at the school on time so none of the session is missed. Our school day begins at 9am. The front door of the school will automatically be unlocked during arrival and dismissal times. Due to the disruption that occurs when a classrooms session is interrupted, if

your child arrives after 9 a.m., you will be given a tardy slip. In the event that you are arriving any time outside arrival or dismissal please knock on the door to avoid the doorbell ringing throughout the school.

If lateness becomes chronic (more than five), the student will not be admitted after 9:00 a.m., and can return to school the next day, provided they are on time. Excessive tardy's and missed days may result in dismissal from our school program.

Pick-up procedure:

Parents should walk to their child's classroom for drop off and pick up during regular school arrival and dismissal times. If a student is late or dismissed early they should be brought to the lobby and a staff member will assist them to call.

We will only release children to persons previously designated by their parents. A person may be so designated either on the appropriate form at the beginning of the school year, or in a letter, signed by the parent, on the day of pickup. When someone other than a parent or other previously authorized person is sent to pick up a child, that person must be listed on your emergency contact form and show a valid ID.

Need for a Functional Behavior Assessment

In cases of self-injurious, aggressive, or highly disruptive behaviors, The ABA Academy will conduct an FBA and subsequent BIP by a BCBA. For students who are interfering with the learning of others we may require them to participate a 1:1 intervention program with the goal of reducing interfering behaviors and reintegrating into the group setting. 1:1 intervention may not be completely covered by tuition and any additional expenses will be the responsibility of the parent.

Non restraint policy

The ABA Academy uses a hands off approach in dealing with problem behaviors by implementing the use of positive behavior intervention and supports, without the use of restraint and seclusion. Our staff will not restrain students in crisis and students requiring restraint will be discharged and referred to a more restrictive school program.

If a crisis situation occurs in which a student places themselves or another person in harms way, or if they attempt to leave school premises, our staff will call 911 for police support and notify parents immediately.

Incident and Ouch Reports

In the event that a student is either injured or has engaged in a behavior of certain intensity, we will make the parent aware by completing an incident report. Upon arrival, your child's teacher will explain the report to you, ask you to sign it, and send a copy home for your records.

Policy for Visitors/ Other Team Player

The ABA Academy allows parent visitation and welcome parents to observe their children learning. Because too many visitors may become a disruption all visits must be arranged and approved by the school director and parents should refer to the Observation Policy. In cases of children needing outside speech and OT therapy services on site parents should request a meeting to gain approval and schedule at appropriate times. If your child is receiving therapy from an outside provider it is the PARENT responsibility to communicate with that provider in regards to cancellations/absences.

Duty to Report

All staff have a duty to report mistreatment or abuse of children. If these conditions are suspected it staff duty to report to Call or Report it online at:
<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>

Property Destruction:

In the event that a student damages or destroys school property or that of another student it will be the parent's responsibility to pay for the cost of the items. If a parent does replace the item within 7 business days the student will not be permitted to return to school.

Toileting:

The ABA Academy will admit children who have not been toilet trained and are wearing pull ups. For students wearing pull ups it is the parents responsibility to supply the school with necessary items such as wipes, gloves, pull ups etc.

Children who are not wearing pull ups and are toilet trained will not be assisted physically during bathroom and will be expected to wipe and care for themselves although prompts may be given as necessary.

If you are needing your child to be toilet trained parents should speak with their classroom BCBA to learn about the school policy for newly trained students wearing underwear to school.

Enrollment for Following School Year

Placement in the Academy does not guarantee placement for the following school year and parents are required to register for each new school year. Registration for current students will open one month prior to registration for new students. In order to secure your child's

enrollment in the following school year you must complete new registration paperwork and pay in full the enrollment fee. Registration must be completed and turned into the office by the Friday before the last day of school. Registration packets received after this date will not be guaranteed a spot in the upcoming year.