



### **Child Handbook Policies and Procedures**

**Phone** (615) 206-0842

**Fax** (615) 206-0841

**Email:** Info@PALSPreschool.org

**Hours of Operations** 6:30 AM – 5:00 PM Monday – Friday

PALS Preschool (formerly) Gallatin Child Care Center opened on August 14, 2006. The center provides Sumner County families with a 3 STAR Quality Preschool Program. The center's mission is to provide childcare to low income and/or minority families living in Sumner County in a safe, positive, loving environment. The center serves children one to five years of age. The center uses a sliding pay scale to set parent fees based on family size and income. Three meals are served daily.

PALS Preschool does not discriminate against race, age, religion, gender, national origin, or political views.

**To Enroll a Child**, you must have:

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$30.00 Registration Fee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Child File
- \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Certificate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Immunization Record
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number
- \_\_\_\_\_ Proof of Income/Mid Cumberland Certificate

**Holidays and Preschool Closings:** New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day (July 4<sup>th</sup>), Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day (Thursday and Friday), Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. It may become necessary to close the center because of inclement weather or some other uncontrollable natural event. Teachers will notify parents by phone and post closings on Channel 5 TV station if this becomes necessary. Parents will be required to pay for the entire week. Please update emergency numbers. PALS Preschool will close two days a year for Professional Development for Staff to complete the required DHS training hours.

**Chain of Command:** PALS Preschool is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors, Executive Director, Program Coordinator, and Staff. PALS Preschool with State of Tennessee Child Care Center's Rules and Regulations. The Board of Directors meets every other month and includes a Parent Advisory Council Member. If you would like to serve on the Board in a decision-making role as a Parent Advisor, please contact the Director during normal office hours at 615-206-0842.

**Enrollment:** Parents complete the Enrollment Package, provide necessary documents, pay a \$30.00 nonrefundable Registration Fee, and a \$20.00 Supply Fee per child due March 1 of each year.

**Parent Fees:** Fees are based on a sliding scale according to family size and income. You are required to pay for the entire week regardless of the number of days your child attends. The cost

of care for a child 13-months and under is \$180.00-\$331.20, cost for 13 months – 72 months is \$180.00 - \$270.00. Any parent that becomes two weeks past due may lose childcare until balance is paid. A two-week notice is required if you decide to withdraw your child from the center. You will be charged for those two weeks. All Parents are required to pay weekly. Parents using the Mid Cumberland Program will pay any charges that the certificate program does not pay such as rate increase over the State's payment, Late Pick Up Charges, Registration Fee, Supply Fee, or Return Check Fees.

**Late Pick-Up Charge:** Any child that is not picked up by 5:00 PM will be charged \$5.00 per minute, per child late charges. If the center has not been able to contact anyone on your child's Emergency Form to pick up your child by 6:00, the Gallatin Police Department will be called. You can go to the police department to pick up your child after 6:00 PM. After three times of being late your Late Pick-Up Charge will be \$10.00 per minute per child. After three times of being late, you may lose your childcare services.

**Parent Evaluations:** Parents are encouraged to complete annual evaluations. Information from these evaluations serves to improve our program and make necessary changes.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences:** Children will be assessed every six months for child development using the Brigance Assessment and Screening Tool. The assessments' results will be discussed with parents. We have one Parent/Teacher Conference each year. Goals and objectives will be set to meet each child's needs. Children who need referrals for specialized developmental delays will be referred as needed. Teachers will support collaboration with specialists using the child's IEP plan through daily activities. By signing his Handbook Policy Book, I give permission for Professional Services to work with my child at the center.

**Teaching Staff:** Classrooms have a lead teacher, assistant teacher and/or floater assigned to work with children. All teachers are required to have provided required DHS documents, graduated from high school or have a GED, have a current medical form, submitted three (3) written references, twelve hours of annual training, have approved criminal background check, and be certified in Adult/Child CPR and First Aid.

**Sick Children:** Sick children will not be allowed to stay at the center. Please do not bring your child to PALS Preschool if your child has a fever of 101 or over, diarrhea (more than 3 times in an 8 hour period or complete watery diarrhea), excessive runny nose, unusual spots or rashes, severe coughing or difficulty breathing), vomiting, sore throat with fever, pink eye, yellowish skin or eyes, severe itching on body or scalp, or any contagious disease. Any child showing these symptoms will be sent home. Children must be symptoms free for 24 hours without the aid of medications before returning to PALS Preschool. Medications will only be given to children with special needs with DHS Medication Forms completed. Medication must be kept locked up. Epi Pens must be in original container with child's name printed on label, within expiration date, and with DHS Medication Form completed.

**Ringworm:** If the ringworm is on an exposed area, the area must be covered. A child will be sent home and must be treated. The child can return in 24 hours.

**Infestation of Lice Bugs, Bed bugs, Fleas, and/or Mites:** A child that is found to have lice, lice bugs, fleas, mites, scabies, or bed bugs will be sent home immediately. Children with lice should be treated and a forty-eight (48) waiting period will be required before the child can return to the

center. Children found to have bed bugs will be dismissed from the center. Mites can come from animals, dust, and older air units. Families should shampoo all carpets, wash all bed clothes, wash all stuffed animals, any all-cloth items, and check other family members in the home. Bed bugs will require an exterminator to treat your home.

**Immediate Dismissal:** A child may be dismissed from PALS Preschool for: (1) Child's behavior toward another child or adult, (2) Parent or guardian's behavior toward a child or adult. (3) Failure to sign and/or follow center policies. These behaviors include but are not limited to: violence, verbal threats, and bodily injury or aggression actions.

**Inclement Weather:** PALS Preschool follows the Volunteer State Community College policy for closing for inclement weather. When Vol State closes, the PALS Preschool will close. Parents can watch Channel 5 TV for announcements if Vol State is not in session. If preschool leadership determines it is necessary for the safety of the children and the staff to close early, parents will be notified by phone call. If you change your phone number, please make sure we have the new number.

**What Families Can Expect from Us:** PALS Preschool has an "Open Door Policy" which means any parent can visit during the day, call to speak to the teacher, or request a meeting with the director about questions or issues concerning the program or their child. Our Creative Curriculum is designed to develop your child's skills in Math and Science, Language and Arts, Social and Emotional Development, Gross and Fine Motor, Literacy, and Computer technology. Our program offers a positive classroom that stimulates their development through Learning Centers and activities both indoors and outdoors. Parent Teachers Conferences are offered annually. DHS mandated "Keeping Kids Safe" Child Safety Curriculum and Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Reporting Trainings are presented to families annually. Parents may review content before information is taught to the children. Parent Education and other Community 211 Resources are support tools to build networks for families by giving telephone numbers and contact information for referrals to other professional services. The staff of PALS Preschool is required to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children Services. There may be times when your family experiences major stress that may have an impact on your child's behavior. We appreciate being informed of these changes that may occur so we can better understand the changes in your child's behavior.

**What We Expect from Families:** Parent involvement is appreciated by parents by volunteering with daily activities in the classrooms or special events such as fund raisers, Thanksgiving Dinner, Open House, and Rocking Reader Week. A calendar will be posted on the Parent Board located in the front lobby. Please sign your name and add a contact number on the day you will be able to volunteer. The center strives to meet the needs of our families we are serving. Parent participation includes evaluating the center, attending Parent/Teacher Conferences, keeping your child's file current and immunizations up to date. PALS Preschool uses this information to update policies and makes necessary changes. The staff learns from parents a child's interest, the family's approaches to learning, and the child's developmental needs. We learn about your concerns and goals for your child. This information is incorporated into the ongoing classroom planning. As parents get involved in their child's education, children's attitudes and school achievement reflect positive gains. PALS Preschool will learn about individual cultures, values, beliefs, behaviors, and communication styles through open conversation. Children of all backgrounds find acceptance in their environment when they can comfortably explore both

differences and similarities. Together, we can work to teach your child the skills needed for their future. Extended family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles) are welcomed to visit anytime in the classroom and participate in routine classroom activities.

**Family Support:** includes 211 Local Resource Numbers, Keeping Kids Safe Curriculum Training, Tuition Scholarships, and serving on the center's Advisory Board. Christmas gifts for children for families in need, and weekend Backpack Program for families needing food.

**USDA Food Program: PALS Preschool** is approved to use the USDA Federal Food Program. All meals will be supplied at no additional cost to the parent. If your child has food allergies to milk, juice, or any foods, a DHS Medical Statement must be signed by your child's doctor.

**Parent Fees:** Fees are determined according to your family's size and total gross income. Income Eligibility Forms will be completed annually. We accept the Mid Cumberland Child Care Certificate Program where the State sets the Parent Fees. A \$35.00 registration fee is due. Parent fees are due on Monday and must be paid by 5:00 PM on Friday. Should a parent become delinquent, immediate withdrawal will be required until the entire balance is paid. All forms in your child's application must be completed before your child can begin with an immunization record completed by their child's physician and up to date. Supply Fee is an annual fee PALS Preschool uses to purchase supplies needed for the classrooms such as art supplies.

**Release of Child:** PALS Preschool staff cannot release a child to anyone whose behavior may place the child in danger. If your child is required to ride in a child safety seat you must have a child safety seat before your child can leave.

**Signing Your Child In and Out:** Children must be accompanied by an adult upon arriving and exiting PALS Preschool. Each child must be signed in and out by an adult (a person over 18 years of age). If someone other than those authorized in your child's file is picking up your child, you are required to notify the center by phone call or a written note. This is very important as the center staff will not release your child to any unauthorized people. Parents are expected to pick their child up on time. Alternate arrangements must be made if you cannot pick up your child by 5:00 PM. Late charges are \$1.00 per minute, per child after 5:00 PM.

**Two Week Notice Required:** A two-week notice is required if you withdraw your child from PALS Preschool. You will be charged for the two-week notice.

**“Three Strikes and You're Out Behavior Policy:** The staff will do all we can to work with families to help with behavior issues. But, after two (2) written warnings and no changes have been made in your child's behavior, your child will be dropped from PALS Preschool on the third warning. Please take it very seriously if you are called to the center for an out-of-control child. PALS Preschool works with TEIS, TN Voices, and the Sumner County Board of Education for referrals. Your child will be dismissed immediately for any aggressive actions or bodily injury toward any child or staff member.

**Absenteeism:** The cut-off time to bring your child to the center is 9:00 am. Parents need to call us if your child is going to be absent each day by 9:00. If a child on the Mid Cumberland Certificate Program misses 20 days, parents may lose their childcare assistance.

**Supplies:** Parents provide diapers, pull-ups, and wet wipes must supply these items as needed. Parents of children under the age of two and non-verbal children will receive a Daily Sheet to

provide information about your child’s daily activities and request any items needed to properly care for your child. If you bring your child to preschool without these needed items, you will not be able to drop off your child. Children should not bring toys, food, or money to preschool.

**Routine Maintenance:** The Gallatin Housing Authority conducts annual maintenance on the facility. Repairs are made as needed. The playground is checked daily for safety hazards. The State of Tennessee conducts annual checks on the playground.

**Emergency Evacuation:** In case of an emergency evacuation, the children will be walked to the R.T. Fisher School that is located one block from the center where parents will be called to pick up their children. The second evacuation site is Gallatin Housing Office, and the third site is Gallatin Civil Center. Please update the emergency numbers when numbers are changed.

**Emergency After Hours Numbers** is listed to contact Gallatin Housing Authority Office at 615-651-2222 or 615-651-2252.

**Transition Plan:** Each child shall have a transition time when moving from one age group to another. The child shall spend morning time, afternoon time, lunch time, and/or playtime with new group to help with the transition. A letter will be sent to parents informing them of the move to new age group and each teaching staff will have conversations with the families.

If the Director is absent there are two additional teaching staff that are in charge to handle issues that may arise. Ms. Mary Johnson and Ms. Hailey Suttle will be in charge.

**Parent Advisory Board Member:** We have a Parent Advisor on our Board. The Parent Advisor can attend Board meetings to represent our parents with comments or concerns about the Program.

Staff are required to complete 12 hours of specific training annually. Among those trainings is the Prevention Strategies to Assist in Coping with a Child in Distress and Abusive Head Trauma, Skahen Baby Syndrome, Child Abuse, and Sudden Death Syndrome. (SIDS).

Please sign and date that you have read the PALS Preschool Handbook. If you have any questions concerning your child or the program, please call 615-206-0842.

Thank you for your trust in placing your child at PALS Preschool.

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**Signature**

**Date**

**Revised May 28, 2025**