



***“Our Stars Shine The Brightest”***

# 2024-2025 PARENT HANDBOOK

March, 2025 edition

**Shining Stars Childhood Care & Education Centre**

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## **WELCOME**

We welcome you and your family to Shining Stars Childhood Care and Education Centre and look forward to supporting you in your role as parents. We value the uniqueness of each family and will make every effort to meet your individual needs. While Shining Stars is primarily for your child, it is your school also. We encourage you to participate in our events and programs and help chaperone field trips. We hope that you will find Shining Stars to be a wonderful place that continues to strengthen your relationship with your child.

As with any service organization, however, we must set forth policy to promote the common good and ensure compliance with governmental rules and regulations. This handbook is written as a guide to summarize helpful information and to highlight our policies. We encourage you to keep it on hand and use it as a reference, but it is not intended to take the place of open, personal communication. We encourage you to voice any concerns you may have to your child's teachers or to administration.

Shining Stars' employees are highly motivated and dedicated early childhood professionals who love children. We are committed to our staff and recognize them as vital components of a successful program for your children. We make every effort to ensure the work environment is pleasant and supportive of their needs. We value each staff member's life experience and want to empower him or her as individuals. We support staff development and continuing education because we believe that adults who are learning bring that same enthusiasm for learning to the children.

### ***Child Guidance and Discipline Policies***

A critical area of our curriculum is helping children learn and exercise self-control. We believe this is best achieved in a loving, supportive environment where children are treated with respect and fairness.

Our philosophy on discipline is based on respect for the child. The key to success for children is in preparing a supportive learning environment and using selective intervention to guide children in their behavior. We believe that when the environment and activities are prepared, children can initiate their own play and exploration, and the need for teacher control is reduced.

Our policy in helping children gain self-control is to intervene and redirect energies before problems begin. Our positive discipline approach consists of redirection, choices, consequences, warnings, supplying language and problem solving. We cannot write enough guidelines to fit every child or situation. Therefore, each child is treated as an individual and parents are expected to work as partners with the Shining Stars staff in helping the child practice self-discipline and self-regulation in the classroom.

If an unacceptable behavior begins to occur at Shining Stars, parents are expected to participate in a conference to develop a plan to correct the behavior in a positive way. The plan will be suited to the child and the situation as there is no one-size-fits all approach to corrective performance.

Should a child's behavior cause themselves or other children to be put at risk or show disregard and disrespect to authority and/or disrupt the school, Shining Stars, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to expel the child with no refund provided.

We recognize that children may respond to changes and situations they do not fully understand in sometimes unexpected ways. It is important that you keep the Shining Stars staff informed of matters that may be affecting your child's behavior. In this way, we can offer support when they are at our school.

Our goal is to assist you in raising a happy, well-adjusted child. We can accomplish this goal best through mutual respect and support. We expect that you, as a parent, will give us that support.

### ***Biting Policy***

As we know, biting can be a common occurrence among children who do not have language to express their feelings. We understand that biting is normal, but it is not an acceptable means of resolving issues. At Shining Stars, we will take immediate action in the classroom as well as with the family regarding biting incidents. Immediate action includes, but is not limited to, documenting the biting incident with an incident report for both parties involved, in addition to observing, shadowing, or separating the children. If a specific biting incident continuously occurs, and if we do not receive appropriate cooperation from the family or the behavior continues, the child may be expelled from our Centre for safety.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

We hope that Shining Stars is one of many enriching experiences in you and your child's lives. Because we recognize that you are entrusting us with your most precious family member(s), we want you to consider Shining Stars as part of your extended family. Consequently, you are considered an essential element in every facet of your child's activities at Shining Stars.

### ***Parent-Teacher Conferences***

Children's assessments are conducted throughout the year to provide parents with an overview of their child's developmental progress. Throughout the year, we conduct portfolio assessments, which involve the collection of multiple samples and repeated observations of the child's performance in naturally occurring situations. We also evaluate the child's developmental progress through notation during group as well as one-on-one interactions between the teacher and individual students. Parent-teacher conferences are also held biannually. During these conferences, we take the time to answer any questions or concerns parents may have regarding their child's experience at the center. These conferences also

enable parents and staff to work closely to meet each child's specific needs. Parents and teachers are also free to request additional conferences any time they wish. We utilize the information gathered during children's assessments and parent-teacher conferences to improve and update individualized curriculum for each child.

### ***Resolving Parental Concerns***

Occasionally, differences in philosophy or child-rearing practices may occur in the childcare setting. All concerns about your child's care should be discussed promptly with a teacher or the administration to come to a resolution that will best support your child.

### ***Classroom Observations***

Parents are encouraged to sign up for the closed circuit camera system via WatchMeGrow for added insight into our programs and the daily life of your young child at our daycare. No screenshots or videotaping is allowed.

### ***Volunteer Program***

Parents and volunteers are encouraged to accompany the children on field trips and offer assistance on special projects throughout the year. Some suggestions for parental involvement include:

Sign up to be a room parent or parent volunteer.

Volunteer to visit the classroom and read a story. Donate books.

Accompany your child on a field trip as a chaperone.

Help scholarship a child.

Persons wishing to volunteer will be provided with our Volunteer Application and Volunteer Policy, which outlines requirements of volunteers (including child protection training and police clearances).

### ***Parental Discipline Protocol***

Shining Stars asks that when you pick-up your children, if you notice a situation that warrants disciplinary action, please notify the teachers in the classroom or administration. Please do not take it upon yourself to discipline any children in our care. Parents entrust Shining Stars and our teachers to discipline children according to our policies set forth in our Parent Handbook.

Due to potential conflicts of interest, we request that parents/families not befriend our teachers or staff on any internet source (eg. Facebook) or texting.

### ***Website and Other School Communication***

Shining Stars maintains a website as a tool to promote communication between the Centre the parents and the children. You may visit our website at <http://www.shiningstarscayman.com> to obtain Shining Stars policies.

We use an app called **Procare** to communicate with our Parents as we document and memorialize your child's achievements. You are expected to download this app to your phone as it will also allow you to check your children in and out of the Center using geofencing technology.

### ***Newsletter***

Shining Stars publishes a monthly newsletter to keep you informed of our activities. Please refer to our monthly calendar for events in which you would like to participate. In addition, please refer to our yearly Event Calendar, which also informs you about upcoming events and school closings.

### ***Camera***

Subscriptions to WatchMeGrow are available for a monthly fee of \$20. Registered users are not allowed to share their passwords with anyone else and **under no circumstances is any type of recording allowed**. Violations will result in immediate expulsion of the child and you will be liable for any civil penalties or lawsuits brought on behalf of the Centre, other children, parents and/or staff. WatchMeGrow uses high level security data encryption and protection, storage and deletion.

## **ENROLLMENT**

Both parents or guardians are required to sign and date the enrollment application and Parent Handbook Acknowledgment, provide a copy of their child's birth certificate, immunization record, proof of health insurance and a small photo of their child. Registration fee, facility fee and deposit are due prior to enrollment.

In the event of inclement weather, power outage, or a natural disaster we will follow Cayman Islands governmental closing schedule.

We do not provide a reduction in tuition for holiday closings, teacher workshop days or illnesses. Please refer to the Shining Stars Academic and Event Calendar on page 16 for scheduled closings and events. Should we be required to close due to government mandate or natural disaster, half tuition will be charged until we are given permission to re-open.

## **DAILY PROCEDURES**

### ***Daily Sign-In and Sign-Out***

Previously, your child was checked in and out daily using our biometric finger scanner but since COVID, parents are not allowed into the facility so the child is dropped off at the entrance. When you bring your child to school, you certify that to the best of your knowledge, your child is in good health and can participate fully in all activities. You may either check your child in and out using the Procare app or Shining Stars will do it manually using this app.

Parents are required to wait outdoors with their children until Shining Stars staff accept them into the facility. It is important that children are aware that their parents are leaving. While this acknowledgement may result in an occasional emotional upset, parents should take comfort in knowing that such separation anxiety usually ends by the time the parent leaves the premises. Parents are required to list the name, address, and phone number of each person other than the parent who is authorized to care for their child in an emergency. Parents or any other person designated to pick up a child must be prepared to show picture identification to the Shining Stars staff. Children are not released to any other person than named on the registration form, unless we have prior written request from the parent. Children are not released to anyone younger than eighteen years old unless specified in a letter that is signed by the parent.

### ***Sleeping Arrangements***

After lunch, restroom use, and hand washing, the children will take a nap or rest quietly on their individual nappers. The classroom will resume scheduled activities once the children in the classroom are awake. You are required to ensure the bedding is labeled and completely sealed in a knapsack.

### ***Clothing***

**Uniforms are mandatory** as well as highly beneficial to children. It helps them fit in with the other children as well as providing a sense of belonging and identity which is conducive to learning.

Please be sure that your child's name is clearly marked on all articles of clothing, nappers and backpacks so that we can minimize the loss of personal belongings. In the event of a missing item, please notify us promptly. Unclaimed items are donated to charity periodically.

We ask that toddlers have two changes of clothing and a supply of disposable diapers and wipes. Preschoolers should have one change of clothing.

### ***Personal Belongings***

It is difficult for young children to share toys and personal belongings with other children. Likewise, it is difficult for the staff to monitor all the many belongings children might bring from home and it may present a safety hazard. As a result, with the exception of show-and-tell, **please leave all toys, gum, pets and money at home.** Shining Stars is not liable for lost or theft of any prohibited items. These items may injure other children or cause damage to the facility and are strictly prohibited. Personal items for naptime at Shining Stars should be limited to a pillow or blanket for resting. Children are encouraged to bring a book or record/tape for the teacher to share during group time. Please arrange in advance.

### ***Financial Policies***

#### ***Tuition/Late Payment Charge/Deposit Policy***

We offer our services based upon an annual term through August 15, 2024. Should Shining Stars be forced to close due to government mandate or natural disaster, half fees are required until we can re-open.

Monthly payments are due in full by the 1st. Late payments will be assessed a \$50 fee. Accounts with a balance will be charged a monthly fee equal to 5% of the outstanding balance until the balance is paid in full. Accounts with outstanding balance of more than 1 month are subject to immediate expulsion. Parents/guardians will pay all collection costs associated with their account.

Should it become necessary for you to withdraw your child from Shining Stars, a 30-day advance written notice is required. When a student withdraws at any time during 1st or 2nd quarter, tuition due is 60% of annual amount. Withdrawal at any time during 3rd quarter, tuition due is 80% of annual amount. Withdrawal at any time during 4th quarter, full annual tuition is due.

When you register your child, you are required to pay  $\frac{1}{2}$  of your last month's tuition to guarantee your child's position. The deposit money will be held by Shining Stars and credited back to you upon successful withdrawal from the Centre including submission of a 30-day written notice of withdrawal for the time period of August 1 through August 15, 2024. Withdrawals of children before August 1, 2024 shall result in deposit forfeiture.

### ***Annual Registration/Facility Fee***

An annual non-refundable fees of \$250 for registration/facility fee plus half of one month's tuition is due upon application and guarantees your child's position at Shining Stars. However, the fee does not hold your spot if a waiting list exists. In this case, tuition is due immediately as well.

### ***Discounts/Referrals***

Families enrolling two or more children will receive a five percent discount off the tuition for each child. Families that refer children to our school will receive a \$50 referral fee credit towards tuition after the referred child has been continuously enrolled and in good standing for 3 consecutive months. Please let the office know that you have referred someone before they enroll their child.

### ***Absences and Vacation Credits***

There are no tuition reductions for absences due to illness, holiday breaks, teacher workshop days, vacations, etc.

***Returned checks*** result in a \$100 charge plus any fees that Shining Stars is assessed. A returned check will result in cash-only terms.

### ***Late Pick-Up***



Punctuality is a crucial element in the operation of our Center, and we ask for your cooperation in adhering to these hours. Also, please be conscientious of your child's schedule. Late pick-up fees are **\$35** for the first 15 minutes and one dollar per minute thereafter. These fees are due in cash upon pick-up of the child and you must be given a receipt.

***Record Transfers and Form Completion:***

There shall be a **\$25** charge for each form whether the form is from other schools or immigration.

***Additional Charges*** may be assessed for field trips, shirts, extra-curricular activities, photography, etc. Uniforms are required for attending field trips.

**HEALTH**

***Immunization Requirements***

Each parent must submit their child's immunization record upon enrollment per Public Health. These records are kept on permanent file at the Center and should be updated as your child receives immunizations. You may refer to the Health Department's website for immunization requirements but as of July, 2024, child vaccinations are voluntary and not required for children to attend Shining Stars. Parents who do not wish to have their child vaccinated, they need to inform Public Health in case of an outbreak. Please write a letter stating the reason and send it as an attachment by email to [nola.sanderson@hsa.ky](mailto:nola.sanderson@hsa.ky)

***Child Protection and Safeguarding***

Shining Stars staff and volunteers are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services pursuant to Section 32A of the Children Act (2012 Revision).

Shining Stars has a comprehensive Child Protection Policy which:

- 1) outlines procedures that all staff and volunteers must follow should they suspect that a child is being abused or neglected
- 2) outlines Shining Stars requirement to provide a Safe Environment for children

Shining Stars' Child Protection Policy is in line with the requirements outlined in Ministry of Education's national policies.

By enrolling your child at Shining Stars Childhood Care and Education Centre, you acknowledge that you have read and accept the procedures outlined therein.

Shining Stars also has a comprehensive Staff Code of Conduct which staff members are expected to abide by at all times. Parents and guardians are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this document, and report any concerns about staff conduct to Management.

### ***Keeping Records Current and Confidential***

To provide emergency medical care to children at Shining Stars, we require signed authorization by each child's parent or legal guardian. The authorization form contains vital information about each child; including parents' contact information, and the child's physician contact information. This form must be kept current and on file as long as the child attends Shining Stars. Please notify us of any changes. We will request updated contact information on a quarterly basis. Children's files are stored directly in the office. All child and family information will remain confidential unless a legitimate need exists to share such information. Furthermore, this information will not be disclosed to relevant persons without written permission by a parent or guardian.

### ***Medicine***

Each day that a child is required to take medication at Shining Stars, parents must complete a Medication Authorization Form. The medication must be kept in its original container and clearly state the following information: the child's name, doctor's name, prescribed dosage, time the medication was last given, when you would like it to be given, and date. For over-the-counter medications, we must administer the medication in amounts according to the label directions or as amended by a physician in writing. Shining Stars houses all medications in a secure place, well out of reach of children. We maintain dated records, the amount of medicine dispensed, and the name of the staff person who administered the medication for one year. We also provide refrigeration when necessary. Medicines are returned to you or properly disposed of when they are no longer required by your child.

### ***Illnesses***

While we take precautions to protect your child against illness, most children experience a normal number of minor infections and illnesses throughout the year. In such cases, we provide a quiet, calm place of quarantine for your child to rest while they wait for you to pick them up. When notified, parents must come immediately to pick up their ill child.

We reserve the right to take touchless temperature readings of children each day before they are admitted into Shining Stars. A child will not be admitted if they have a fever of over 100 degrees. It is mandatory for a child to leave the centre if they have a fever of 100 degrees or higher, or if they have diarrhea and/or vomiting. Please keep your children home if their condition could cause harm or sickness to other children and we ask that your child be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to Shining Stars.

Should your child potentially become exposed to an infectious disease at Shining Stars, we will notify you promptly upon advice of Cayman Islands Public Health. In return, we require that you report to us when your child has been exposed to or diagnosed with a particular infection or disease. After recovery, please bring a doctor's note stating that your child is safely cleared to return to Shining Stars.

Although Shining Stars follows the Cayman Islands Public Health and Cayman Islands Environmental Health guidelines and does its utmost to take precaution to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment, children may get sick or injured while attending Shining Stars.

By enrolling your child at Shining Stars, parents and/or guardians acknowledge and accept that there is a risk that illness and/or injuries may occur and agree to hold harmless the Shining Stars organization, owners, management and staff.

### ***COVID PROTOCOL***

Should the need arise to enact COVID protocol procedures, parents will be required to answer specific questions about their child's health and that of their household. Children and staff are required to have their temperature taken and recorded. Children and staff will be kept in "bubbles" so as to reduce the risk of infection to other children and staff. Frequent handwashing and sanitizing of children's hands and the toys and materials that they use most often is also another procedure that is employed. We hope for and expect good communication with parents and guardians in regards to a positive COVID or other illness test should the need arise. This helps insure the safety of all children, their parents, the staff at Shining Stars and the community as a whole.



**GUIDELINES ON**  
**ILLNESS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

1. A child with **CHICKEN POX** should remain home until all lesions are crusted over, about 5-7 days.
2. **CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)** –
  - a) **BACTERIAL** – child should remain home from the time his/her eyes become red and draining until 24 hours after commencing antibiotics.
  - b) **VIRAL**- contagious for 5-7 days.
3. **DIARRHEA AND/OR VOMITING**- child should be kept at home until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours.
4. **TEMPERATURE** of 100 degree Fahrenheit or above- child should be kept home until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours.
5. **THROAT INFECTION**- child should be kept home until 24 hours after commencing antibiotics.
6. **EAR INFECTION**- child can be in school 24 hours after commencing antibiotics; and pain is not severe to prevent child from participate in activities.
7. **PEDICULUS (HEAD LICE)** - child can be in school once treatment has started, however he/she should be excluded from activities likely to cause exposure to other children.
8. **RINGWORM**- child can return to school once treatment has started, however should be excluded from activities likely to cause exposure to other children.
9. **IMPETIGO**- Child should be kept home until treatment has started and all the lesions are crusted over.
10. **COLD & FLU**- if symptoms are mild, child can be in school. The child should be kept home if he/she generally does not feel well, has a persistent cough or is congested. Child should be kept home until fever has subsided for 24 hours.

### ***Nutrition***

Good nutrition is an essential ingredient in our child development program. Shining Stars prepares breakfast, lunch and two snacks daily as part of the meal plan. Each meal and snack is planned to meet a child's nutritional requirements and is presented in an appealing manner. Although we make a good faith effort to ensure meals are provided according to schedule, the available food supply chain on the Island may dictate changes to the menu with little to no warning.

We utilize mealtime to instill in children at an early age the long-term benefits and the joy of healthful eating habits. We make a special effort to encourage the children to sample new foods and to cultivate a taste for those that are nutritionally beneficial. Currently, meals may be served in the dining area flex space or in a classroom. Teachers may be required to help the children sit and eat in an orderly manner.

If your child has special dietary requirements, please inform management in writing as soon as possible. For instance, if your child is gluten or casein sensitive, modifications to the meal plan and snack plan can be addressed.

Parents may provide their children with meals and snacks and must inform us ahead of time for birthday celebrations. Prohibited foods at Shining Stars include snacks containing MSG, soda pop, candy and excessive-smelling foods. They will be returned to you unopened. Birthday foods must be store bought and not homemade.

### ***Outdoor Recreation***

Outdoor recreation for fresh air and exercise is scheduled twice daily, weather permitting. The playground has developmentally appropriate climbing structures for each age group. Your child is given the opportunity to climb, balance, stack, swing and simply recreate. In addition, the children enjoy playing, participating in group games, planting flowers and vegetables, experiencing a variety of textures, and having science class under a tree.

### ***Children with Special Needs***

At Shining Stars, we believe that every child should have a successful and meaningful experience. We will do everything we can to include every child. However, administration will make the final decision as to whether or not Shining Stars is able to accommodate a child with special needs.

Upon enrollment, we require a copy of your child's LSP, EIP, or any other individualized plans to enable the teacher to tailor your child's curriculum regarding any disabilities or other special learning needs in conjunction with the child's therapist. A shadow may be required.

## **SAFETY**

### ***Registration***

Shining Stars is registered by the Cayman Islands Education Ministry and maintains high standards as it relates to our physical facility, staff, health and safety procedures, nutrition and record keeping. We support high standards in child care, as they are in the best interest of the children in our care.

### ***Field Trips***

Field trips will be planned periodically throughout the school year. Information regarding the field trips will be presented in your child's monthly classroom newsletter and calendar via email. In addition, sign-up sheets will be provided during the week prior to the field trip. The sign-up sheet serves as a permission slip to allow your child to attend the field trip. This sheet will need to be signed and initialed for your child to attend the field trip. Each child must wear their Shining Stars uniform as well. During field trips, the teacher and the bus driver will have cell phones to call for help whenever necessary and alternate transportation arrangements will be made if there is a problem with the bus during the trip. Parents are allowed to drive their own children to and from field trips but not other's children. Staff are not allowed to drive children to or from field trips.

### **Transportation & Babysitting**

Staff are not allowed to drive your children to and from Shining Stars nor babysit unless they are Caymanian. Such arrangements are private agreements and Shining Stars accepts no responsibility for either the transportation or the babysitting.

### ***Physical Facility***

To ensure the security of the children at Shining Stars, staff or administration is readily available at the front door to greet incoming guests. Shining Stars' playground is enclosed by fences, locks and safety latches. Shining Stars maintains high standards in health, hygiene, cleanliness, and comfort. To provide a nurturing environment, we are equipped with appropriately sized furnishings, playground equipment and bathroom fixtures designed to help your child develop self-reliance skills.

### ***Emergency Preparedness***

In accordance with the Cayman Islands Legislation, Shining Stars holds regularly scheduled fire drills. It is crucial to the safety of the children that they learn proper emergency evacuation procedures. In our effort to simulate emergency conditions during fire drills, children are required to exit the building, dressed as they are, for a few minutes. Evacuation plans are posted.

In the event of a disease outbreak, Shining Stars will contact the Cayman Islands Public Health Department and proceed according to their instructions. In the event that Shining Stars has an intruder/volatile person, we will contact the police department and follow their instructions.

In the event that the center is severely damaged or declared unsafe, the staff will evacuate all children to a designated emergency shelter to await the arrival of a parent or guardian. Should such an emergency occur, the administration of Shining Stars would notify each child's parents. In the event of inclement weather, sustained power outage or a natural disaster (floods, hurricanes, etc.), we will follow Cayman Islands Government closing schedule.

## 2024-2025 PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The annual registration/facility fee is \$250 and is non-refundable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. A security deposit equivalent to half of one month's tuition is charged upon enrollment. This will be credited to your tuition for the period August 1-15, 2025. Withdrawing your child before the end of the annual term will result in deposit forfeiture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The enrollment is for an annual term. When a child withdraws at any time during 1st or 2nd quarter, tuition due is 60% of annual amount; withdrawal at any time during 3rd quarter, tuition due is 80% of annual amount; withdrawal at any time during 4th quarter, full annual tuition is due.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Monthly payments are due in full by the 1st of the month. Late payments will be assessed a \$50CI fee. Accounts with a balance will be charged a monthly fee equal to 5% of the outstanding balance until the balance is paid in full. Accounts with outstanding balance of more than 1 month are subject to immediate expulsion. Parents/guardians agree to pay all collection costs associated with this account. Payment should be made through direct deposit but cash or check is acceptable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. In addition to your tuition, there may be a charge for any extra-curricular activities you choose for your child (i.e. swim lessons, field trips, music lessons, Christmas/Easter Camps, etc.).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. You agree to hold harmless the ownership, management and staff of Shining Stars for any illness your child may incur while attending Shining Stars.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. You agree to keep your child home if they are sick/infected. They will not be admitted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. We are closed for holidays, breaks and teacher workshop days. No tuition refunds or credits will be provided for these or other absences the child may experience.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. You acknowledge that you have read the policies available on the [Shining Stars Webpage](#), and accept the procedures/processes outlined in said policies.

We acknowledge that we have read the parent handbook and agree to the policies set forth. We further acknowledge that many areas of the Centre are visible via a closed circuit camera system for viewing by parents, grandparents, legal guardians and staff and management of Shining Stars. We have read and understand the fee arrangements and conditions detailed in the parent handbook and agree to abide by them. Both parents must sign the Enrollment Form and this Parent Handbook Acknowledgement form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child(ren) Name(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent1 / Guardian1 Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child(ren) Name(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent2 / Guardian2 Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date