

## ***Explorations Academy Policies & Procedures Handbook***

*Welcome to Explorations Academy ("EXA"). We are thrilled that you have chosen to join us! Please read through this **Policies & Procedures Handbook** thoroughly and carefully, as it offers all of the information you need to enjoy your year with us. We always welcome your feedback on how we can improve the educational opportunities we are providing. Please feel free to email me at [director@explorationsky.org](mailto:director@explorationsky.org). We look forward to having a great year with you!*

*Sincerely,*

*Katie Edwards*

*Director of **Explorations Academy***

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**Explorations Academy** is dedicated to building ALL homeschoolers' educational opportunities by providing elective sessions in a range of academic subjects and related arts. Our goal is to build a strong foundation of knowledge. EXA is an inclusive, secular electives program that welcomes all homeschoolers.

EXA sessions are offered as an extension to your child's education; they are not a complete replacement for homeschooling nor is it a private school. Homeschooling parents are responsible for their child's full education and maintaining all educational records according to their state laws. Session instructors will provide narrative feedback on student progress throughout the year. Parents may ask for additional input from their child's instructors, but the parents are ultimately responsible for assigning grades, credits, and keeping records. Transcript credits are not maintained by EXA. Parents are responsible for all credit verification. Kentuckiana Homeschool ("KHS"), EXA, and instructors who hold sessions at EXA assume no educational responsibility.

## CORE VALUES

At *Explorations Academy*, we will strive for:

- Commitment: To quality academic pursuit in a secular setting, to teaching and learning with integrity and perseverance.
- Scholarship: To seek knowledge in an environment of curiosity and discovery, to question and explore, to be accountable and steadfast.
- Respect: To respect oneself and others, one's place and surroundings, to consider intent and impact, and to act in ways that demonstrate empathy and kindness.
- Inclusion: To understand and learn from diversity, to create a safe and affirming community that accepts and values every person as they are, and to protect equity and mutual trust.

## LOCATION

Our drop-off electives program is located inside Saint Andrew UCC, 2608 Browns Ln. Louisville, KY 40220.

## CORRESPONDENCE

All official communication is done through email or Google Classroom. Please ensure that we have a current email address. Check your email regularly to ensure important items are not missed. You may want to consider adding the director and support email addresses to your contacts; group emails from these addresses may end up in spam folders.

NOTE: A private Facebook group for enrolled families may be utilized to post announcements and share pictures.

Katie Edwards, Director - [director@explorationsky.org](mailto:director@explorationsky.org)

Absences should be reported to support staff - [support@explorationsky.org](mailto:support@explorationsky.org)

All forms and checks should be mailed to:

Kentuckiana Homeschool, Inc.

Attn: Explorations Academy

PO Box 221673

Louisville, KY 40252

Do not call or send mail to Saint Andrew UCC. They are not responsible for our correspondence.

## SESSION MEETING DATES/TIMES

**Explorations Academy** will meet on the following 28 Thursdays for the 2025/26 Program Year:

Fall 2025	Spring 2026
September – 4, 11, 18, 25	January – 15, 22, 29 (break 1/1, 1/8)
October – 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	February – 5, 12, 19, 26
November – 6, 13, 20 (break 11/27)	March - 5, 12, 19, 26
December - 4, 11, (break 12/18, 12/25)	April - 9, 16, 23 (break 4/2) (makeup day 4/30)

Each semester is 14 weeks. Programming starts promptly at 10 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m.

Each Thursday will include four academic sessions that will be 55 minutes long. The schedule will be:

Session 1: 10-10:55 a.m.

Session 2: 11-11:55 a.m.

Lunch Break (Students enrolled in Session 2 will stay in that classroom for lunch.)

Session 3: 1-1:55 p.m.

Session 4: 2-2:55 p.m.

**Students may only be present in the EXA classrooms, library, or anywhere at the Saint Andrew UCC campus if they are actively attending a session.** There will be no monitored study hall or waiting area for students who are awaiting the beginning of a session for which they are enrolled. Students may arrive no more than ten minutes before a session for which they are enrolled and must be picked up from campus within five minutes of the end of a session if they are not enrolled in the following session.

For example, if Mary Sue is enrolled in Session 1 from 10-10:55am and Session 3 from 1-1:55pm but is not enrolled in Session 2 from 11-11:55am, she must be picked up by 11:05am and can return to campus at 12:50pm. For the safety of all students and to maintain a positive relationship with our hosting partner, it is essential that all participating families respect and adhere to this rule.

There will be a break for lunch (including 30 minutes of free time and/or structured activities after lunch is finished) from 12-12:55 pm. Students who are enrolled in Session 2 are welcome to bring a shelf-stable lunch from home that they will eat with their Session 2 classmates. Only students enrolled in Session 2 may stay onsite for the lunch break. **Students who are not enrolled in Session 2 but are enrolled in Session 3 may not arrive early to join the lunch break.** Students do not have access to a refrigerator or a microwave. No food delivery allowed. Please send reusable napkins, utensils, and lunch products. Disposable items are strongly discouraged.

## **THE KHS “MORE KIDS, MORE DAYS” DISCOUNT**

A family who enrolls two or more children full-time in both KHS drop-off programs–*Wildflowers Academy* and *Explorations Academy*–can waive all registration fees for *Explorations Academy*. This amounts to a \$200 discount per student. Because registration fees are applied to tuition, this equals a \$200 tuition discount per student. In other words, a family who enrolls two or more children full-time in both programs will pay only \$1000 per student in tuition for *Explorations Academy*. The tuition payments will be due following the standard timeline (July 1/Sept 1/Payment Plan) and no registration fee will be collected for EXA.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

EXA has basic school supplies (pencils, art supplies, glue, paint, scissors) available for student use. Each student should have a backpack or similar tote and a reusable water bottle. If the student is enrolled in Session 2 and will stay on site for lunch, a lunch box and reusable lunch accessories are also needed. Any personal supplies should be clearly labeled with the student's name.

We do ask families to bring in the following consumable supplies based on last name (one per student):

Last Names A–K - 13 gallon trash bags

Last Names L–P - Liquid hand soap refill

Last Names Q–Z - Box of tissues

**Note:** Below is a link to an Amazon cart for your convenience — but feel free to purchase from any store or vendor you prefer.

<https://a.co/0480Bfr>

## **PAYMENTS**

Checks should be made payable to **Kentuckiana Homeschool, Inc.** Checks can be submitted in person following the appropriate timeline at an *Open House* or *Back to School* event at Saint Andrew UCC or mailed to:

Kentuckiana Homeschool, Inc.

Attn: Explorations Academy

PO Box 221673

Louisville, KY 40252

We also accept online credit card and e-check payments. Credit card payments are only available for Full and Half tuition payment plans; these are processed through Cheddarup and have processing fees added automatically. Monthly payments can be set up as automatic bank withdrawals through WAVE and will have a flat \$3 convenience fee added per payment.

## **REGISTRATION FEES**

Registration fees are due within five days of submitting a student's registration form. If EXA cancels any session for which a student is registered for any reason, that student will be placed in their second session choice. If that session is also full or the student did not indicate a second session choice, EXA staff will contact the family to either transfer the session registration fee to another acceptable session or the registration fee will be refunded. **This is the only situation in which registration fees will be refunded.**

## **TUITION PAYMENT PLANS**

Tuition is due in full by July 1. If a family registers after July 1, tuition is due within five days after registration forms are submitted. If a family would like to follow an alternate payment plan, they must discuss and confirm with the Director in advance.

- **FULL PAYMENT:** All TUITION paid by July 1 (or five days after registration forms are submitted if registering after July 1).
- **HALVES:** Split the TUITION into two payments. The first TUITION payment is due by July 1 and the second TUITION payment is due by September 1.
- **MONTHLY:** Make even monthly payments on the total TUITION. A monthly payment plan must be approved in advance by the Director. Monthly payments can be made in the following ways:
  - Pre-dated checks All checks must be submitted at registration, each pre-dated with an acceptable monthly date before December 1 unless otherwise approved by the Director. Monthly payment plan requests received after July 1 must still be completed by December 1.

For example, if one child is registered full-time on May 1, the family will submit a registration fee of \$200 at the time of registration. An approved monthly payment plan could begin in June (4-month plan). A family would need to submit 4 checks for \$250 each by June 1. These checks would be pre-dated for the following dates: June 1, July 1, August 1, and September 1. These checks would be held by Explorations/KHS until the date printed on the check. The check would then be deposited on the relevant until the tuition is paid in full. (If you have attended KHS programming previously with a different payment plan, please email us to set up a similar plan.)

Unfortunately, ***Explorations Academy*** is unable to offer more flexible payment plans to new families. Once you have established a relationship with us, we can offer more flexible plans.

## **SUPPLY FEES**

Supply fees are \$25 per session unless indicated differently in the session description. Supply fees can be paid in full by September 1 or split into two payments. If choosing to make two payments, the first supply fee half is due by July 1 and the second supply fee half is due by September 1.

Registration fees, tuition, and supply fees are NONREFUNDABLE. Refunds are only given if EXA cancels a session. No student may attend sessions unless their account is up to date and/or paid in full before the session begins.

## **CHECK IN/CHECK OUT PROTOCOL**

Parents should park in the lot behind Saint Andrew UCC and walk their child into the building for check in or check out at appropriate times throughout the day. The doors will be open at appropriate times throughout the day to account for the varying enrollment options available at EXA. At any time that the doors are unlocked for families to access the building, an EXA staff member or adult volunteer will be present at the entry. There will be a checkpoint in the atrium where students will be checked in or out of their sessions. Children must be picked up no later than 3:10pm.

For students that are not attending all four sessions, parents may check their child in at the atrium checkpoint 10 minutes before their session begins. Students who are not enrolled in Session 4 can be picked up from the atrium checkpoint five minutes after their final registered session is over.

For example, Timmy is enrolled in Session 2 and Session 3. Timmy's parent will bring him to the atrium checkpoint at 10:55am. Timmy will attend Session 2, enjoy lunch with classmates, and then be picked up at 2:05pm after Session 3 is complete.

As a reminder from a section above, **students may only be present in the EXA classrooms, library, or anywhere at the Saint Andrew UCC campus if they are actively attending a session.**

## **ATTENDANCE**

In order to provide the best learning environment for all students, regular attendance is expected. The majority of the session content at EXA is presented during session time, is hands-on and/or participatory, and cannot be sent home as an assignment. Please try to limit planned absences to two

(2) days in a semester. Longer absences can be discussed with the Director and instructor, but no tuition discounts are offered for extended absences since your student is still occupying a seat in a session. If a student misses three (3) days or more in a semester without contacting the Director, they will be considered no longer a student. Appeals will be considered by the KHS Board of Directors.

## **CURRICULUM**

The sessions at EXA are designed to be academically rigorous; student participation in class and completion of outside work assigned is expected. Each instructor has been chosen for their background and expertise in the subject matter they will present; many have taught at the elementary, high school, or college level in formal education settings. Some sessions will have a Google Classroom component in addition to the material presented in person. This could include further reading, experiments to try at home, discussion questions, or independent research assignments. For a student to gain the most complete learning experience from their sessions at EXA, please guide them to fulfill all session requirements, both in and out of the classroom.

## **BACKPACKS, TOYS, ETC.**

Each student needs to have a backpack labeled with their name to carry supplies and session materials. We highly suggest that students leave toys and personal items at home unless for a specific purpose to support their participation in a session. An example might be a favorite stuffed animal to compare to study of the live animal or a sample of a favorite scented product to examine in a chemistry session. If students are to bring an item from home, instructors will inform families at least two days in advance. Electronics are not allowed unless specifically requested by an instructor. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **DRILLS**

Throughout the school year, we will have emergency response plans in place and practice drills for fire and tornado/severe weather. We will have emergency response plans in place for earthquakes and intruder lockdowns and all staff will have input and be trained with these plans. However, we will

not practice emergency response drills for earthquakes and intruder lockdowns unless there comes a time when it seems necessary to do so. Our partner site, Saint Andrew UCC, is required by law to have emergency response plans in place and practice safety drills as well as allow for both planned and unplanned inspections of emergency systems and certain other safety features. We will work closely with Saint Andrew UCC staff to build specific provisions for KHS programs in the building into their existing emergency response plans and cooperate with any necessary inspections or drills. We will make every effort to announce any emergency response drills or inspections involving emergency systems in advance so that families can prepare their child(ren) for what to expect.

## **ELECTRONICS**

Electronics are NOT allowed at EXA unless discussed in advance with the session instructor. If a student relies on electronics for necessary accommodations or academic support, the session instructor and/or EXA staff will work with the parents to set guidelines for the appropriate use of electronics during the session. Any electronics utilized for necessary accommodations or academic support must not be disruptive or distracting to other students in the session and must not detract from the instructor's ability to lead the session or the student's ability to participate in the session to the best of their ability. The use of electronics for accommodations or academic support must always be in accordance with the guidelines set in discussions between parents and session instructors and/or EXA staff. Any other smartwatches, phones, laptops, tablets, handheld gaming devices, and any similar items must be turned off and silenced completely and left in the child's backpack while at EXA. If a parent needs to reach a child during the day, please contact EXA staff. If any electronics are determined to be disruptive and detrimental to the classroom, they will be held by staff until the end of the day. Please contact the Director to further discuss policy if needed.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

All human endeavors can suffer conflict, and conflict often offers an opportunity for growth. EXA strives for peaceful resolution to any and all conflicts within the student body, in ways that maintain respect and support for EXA and all its students. Anyone who experiences disagreement or

grievance within EXA must adhere to the following steps for resolving the conflict. During this process it is absolutely necessary that complete confidentiality be upheld. Refusal to keep matters confidential may lead to removal from EXA and/or KHS. Please note: these steps are for conflicts between students.

1. Discuss the problem with the person with whom you have a disagreement. Children should ask for the assistance of an adult if needed. If both parties cannot reach agreement in a way that allows them to move forward then proceed to the next step.
2. Parties involved need to meet with a member of the Board for mediation. If mediation is unsuccessful, proceed to the next step.
3. The issue must be presented to a quorum of the Board to include the Board President. The final decision will be at the discretion of the Board. Students and families will be notified of any decisions within five days

## **DISCIPLINE AND STANDARDS**

Students are expected to cooperate and behave with common courtesy. We value kindness and inclusiveness and use a problem-solving approach to conflict. All discipline is done with respect. Parents' support of the EXA disciplinary policy is expected. Only by working together can we effectively provide our students with an enjoyable, effective place of learning. Our discipline policy was created to facilitate that goal. After you have read the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy carefully, please review them with your children to ensure their understanding.

Correction for misbehavior is a part of any instruction and learning. Our desire to have this policy in place is not to oppress the students within EXA, but to ensure we maintain a healthy environment for all of the children. If we are tolerant of disrespect and negative behavior within EXA, then we do an injustice to our students and the Academy as a whole. The Code of Conduct (COC) is at the end of this packet & must be signed before your child can attend. We take the treatment of our fellow humans very seriously and enforce the COC to ensure our community is being kind.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

- If a student is not adhering to the Code of Conduct, the student will be given a verbal warning with the expectation that the student will correct the behavior.
- If unacceptable behavior continues, the student will be sent to the Director or Program Assistant to sit out the remainder of the session or an age-appropriate helpful activity will be assigned and their parent(s) will be notified.
- If unacceptable behavior still continues, the parent(s) will be asked to pick up their child and the student will not be allowed to continue their sessions for the remainder of the day.

Students with repeated behavior issues will be dismissed permanently from EXA with no refund. EXA reserves the right to expel any student from the program if disruptive and/or non-compliant behavior fails to be corrected. If the unacceptable behavior exhibited is severe in nature (as determined by the Board, including but not limited to bullying, sexual misconduct, weapons, violence, threats of violence or similar), the student will be dismissed immediately and permanently with no refund. Authorities will be notified if applicable. It is our duty to protect the children in EXA.

## **LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

The Explorations Academy faculty is not trained in meeting the needs of students with learning differences. Applicants with special needs are advised that only minor accommodations can be made to instruction, and that these must be discussed in advance with the Director and Instructor. Sometimes, it is the case that EXA will not be able to provide a course for a student with needs that fall outside the scope of our program.

## **PHOTO, VIDEO, and WEBSITE RELEASE**

EXA/KHS parents, Administrators, Instructors, Staff, or similar will often photograph and/or video academy activities and events. KHS social media administrators may publish these on the website and/or social media. Names will not be used on the website but may be used in newsletters or emails to member families. Photos may also be used in marketing materials, newsletters, advertising, or similar. Please be aware that by registering your child for EXA and participating in KHS and/or EXA events, you consent to

your child's voice, name, and/or likeness being used, without compensation in any and all media whether now known or hereafter devised, for eternity, and you release Kentuckiana Homeschool, Inc., its successors, assigns, and licensees from any liability whatsoever of any nature. Do not register for EXA or any KHS events if you do not wish to be subject to the foregoing.

## **SICK POLICY**

Your child may NOT attend EXA if they have:

- Been exposed to someone with Covid-19; please follow the current CDC quarantine guidelines
- Symptoms such as fever temp above 100.4°F, cough, shortness of breath, body aches, or sore throat
- Had a fever in the past 24 hours
- ANY discharge from the eyes or nose
- Experienced diarrhea or vomiting in the past 24 hours
- ANY type of rash or unidentified skin irritation that has not been diagnosed as non-contagious by a physician or nurse practitioner
- A cough
- Any communicable illness or parasite (e.g., pink eye, lice, etc.)

We trust your discretion in deciding whether or not your child is well enough to participate; however, for the sake of everyone, if your child is noticed with any of these conditions, you will be asked to pick up your child. Please understand our decisions are made in the best interest of all those who participate. Refunds or credits will not be made for missed sessions.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are expected to behave appropriately with common courtesy while on campus, including no shouting, no touching another person without consent, respecting people and property, no weapons, and remaining on campus in designated areas. At the end of sessions, students are expected to clean up their work area, help clean up the classroom, and be responsible for their belongings. Unnecessary items are best left at home. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Children are expected to be on time for sessions and ready to learn. Some sessions may have homework. Children are expected to complete assignments by the given deadlines. If you have

an objection to an assignment, speak to the Instructor right away. Students should always leave our host facility better than they found it.

## **TARDINESS**

Students are expected to be on time for sessions. Instructors will start the session on time.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

Weapons of any kind are not allowed at EXA. Bringing any weapon to EXA will result in immediate expulsion from the program with no refund.

## **WEATHER POLICY**

We do not follow a set school closure policy, but will close under the best discretion of the EXA staff and/or Saint Andrew UCC staff. We will try to make this decision by 8am the morning of sessions and will communicate through email and social media. If we miss a session day due to weather or an issue at Saint Andrew UCC, we reserve one make-up date for sessions - May 1, 2025. If no session days are canceled, EXA will have its last day on April 24, 2025.

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EXA reserves the right to change, amend, modify, suspend, continue, or terminate all or any part of this document, the offerings, sessions, instructors, location, etc., either in an individual case or in general, at any time without notice. If this document or other information affecting families enrolled with Explorations Academy is altered, families will receive notice within five days of the change. If any changes made affect your willingness to participate in Explorations Academy or Kentuckiana Homeschool, please contact EXA Director Katie Edwards at [director@explorationsky.org](mailto:director@explorationsky.org) or KHS President Carrie Hembree Torres at [admin@kentuckianahomeschool.org](mailto:admin@kentuckianahomeschool.org) as soon as possible.