



woodlands  
**TreeHouse**  
preschool

# PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2019 - 2020

[www.woodlandstreehouse.com](http://www.woodlandstreehouse.com)  
Educating for a Brighter Future...

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# OUR SCHOOL

## Mission and Philosophy

The Woodlands Tree House Preschool's mission is to provide the children of The Woodlands and its surrounding communities with a unique program that will allow them to develop their cognitive, social, emotional, physical and aesthetic abilities in a caring and friendly environment. Based on the theory that children learn by doing and while having fun, active involvement and meaningful experimentation are combined with systematic instruction provided by warm, dedicated and qualified teachers.

## Goals

The early years are critical to a child's later success in learning. The following are goals that the school shall strive to achieve:

- Promote the development of each child's cognitive, social, emotional, physical and aesthetic abilities to their fullest potential.
- Incorporate each child's interest and the events that make up their lives in the daily activities to foster learning and problem solving skills.
- Offer a variety of developmentally appropriate activities to meet children's individual needs and learning styles.
- Provide a team of professional educators with knowledge and experience in teaching young children.
- Promote active involvement of parents in our program.

## Organizational Structure

The School has an advisory Board of Directors (The Board) whose purpose is to review the policy and business management of the school, set tuition and fees, and approve the [Parent Handbook](#).

## Accreditation

The Woodlands Tree House Preschool is a strong proponent of the accreditation program sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It is our goal to be accredited by this institution in the future. As a result, many of our school policies and practices are based on the standards and criteria established by them.

## Curriculum

The Woodlands Tree House Preschool follows the High Reach Learning® Curriculum, an award-winning, research-supported curriculum. The HRL curriculum, designed for children ages 12 months to 5 years, emphasizes a blend of teacher-facilitated and child-initiated activities. The curriculum is delivered through monthly theme-based curriculum programs, integrating language, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, physical, health, and social-emotional domains while attending to children's approaches to learning and

individual learning styles. High Reach believes that children learn best through actively engaging with people and things in their environment. Children are involved in hands-on experiences, real-life adventures, and assisted discovery as they explore concepts through play.

For more information on the curriculum visit: [www.highreach.com](http://www.highreach.com)

### English/ Spanish Bilingual Program for 3's and 4's

Today, as parents and educators, we know the importance of raising our children to become bilingual in order to be able to face the global society in which we live. We also know that the secret to success is to introduce the new language early in life. As a response to the increase in demand for foreign language programs over the last few years, Woodlands Tree House Preschool offers a unique English/Spanish Bilingual program. "Risitas y Sonrisitas" is a Spanish program that will have your children learning Spanish right from the very beginning. For more information on the program visit: [www.spanishforkids.com](http://www.spanishforkids.com)

### Teacher Qualifications and Training

The teaching staff at Woodlands Tree House Preschool is comprised of professional educators with knowledge and experience teaching young children. All employees meet the licensing requirements in order to be able to teach in a licensed facility in the State of Texas, including background checks, and FBI fingerprints. In order to work at The School, all teachers and teacher assistants must receive 24 hours of in-service training yearly which include Recognizing and Preventing Child Maltreatment and SIDS with Head Trauma, in addition to training in CPR and First Aid.

## ENROLLMENT AND TUITION GUIDELINES

### Non-Discriminatory Policy

Enrollment in The Woodlands Tree House Preschool shall be open to any child without discrimination in regard to sex, race, ethnicity, creed or political belief, provided the program can meet the needs of that child.

### Registration

Registration will be held in February each year for the next school year. Currently enrolled students will be given the opportunity to enroll first. Siblings of current students will register next and then enrollment will be open to the general public.

All families must complete The Woodlands Tree House Enrollment Packet. An annual non-refundable registration fee, supply fee and the last month's tuition are due upon registration to secure their place in the program. In order for currently enrolled families to register for the upcoming year, their financial obligations must be current.

A waiting list will be maintained for those interested in enrollment when space is no longer available. As space becomes available parents will be contacted in the order that the names appear on the list, with siblings of currently enrolled students being given priority.

Children wishing to enroll with a later start date are required to pay the registration fee, supply fee and the May deposit at time of registration. Once the class is full, you will be given the opportunity to start paying monthly tuition until your start date or forfeit your spot. All fees will be returned if you choose to forfeit your spot. This is especially important for children wishing to enroll in the 18th month class and considering to start in January.

## Classroom Divisions and Groupings

NO INFANT CARE OR TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED

All classes are grouped by age, and class offerings may change from year to year, depending on enrollment and need. Children remain in their assigned classes from August to May. Typically children are grouped in the following classes: (Age as of September 1)

- Steppers -18 months
- Builders - 18 months - 2's
- Climbers & Hoppers - 2's
- Adventures, Aventureros & Thinkers – 3's
- Explorers, Exploradores & Inventors – 4's
- Transition - 5's

Class sizes are well below the minimum standards for teacher-child ratios. A ratio table is posted in the office indicating the Teacher-Child ratios, within each group size. The program is organized and staffed to minimize the number of groups, teaching staff, and classroom transitions by an individual child.

Children's placement is the responsibility of the Director who will receive input from former teachers, parents, and outside professionals when necessary, when placing children in classes.

## Enrollment Requirements

Parents must complete the Enrollment Packet that is provided to families before their child's first day of school. These forms must be filled out truthfully and completely, including emergency contacts, permission to release, the financial agreement, health insurance information, and the hold harmless agreement.

Texas State Law requires that each student's parent update the information on file. Any changes must be dated and initialed by both director and parent. It is particularly important that the school office and your child's teacher have up- to-date telephone numbers where parents can be reached at all times.

## Tuition

Tuition payments are due on the first day of each month. Any portion of tuition paid five or more days after the due date will be subject to a late fee of \$5 per day. No allowances, credits or refunds shall be made for absences – including vacations, illness or other holidays; nor is credit given if the school must be closed due to weather events, national emergencies, or any other events beyond the school's control.

## Payment Methods

Tuition is calculated on an annual amount that is divided into ten equal payments. The last month's tuition is due upon registration, and subsequent payments are due the first of each month, August through April. Tuition statements are not automatically provided, but are available by request.

We encourage parents to sign up for Tuition Express, a fast, easy and secure way to pay your tuition always on time. If your debit card is declined, there will be a \$25 declined fee that is non refundable. Cash or Checks payable to Woodlands Tree House Preschool may be dropped off in the school office during business hours. Please do not send tuition payments with your child.

## Returned Checks

A processing fee of \$25 will be charged for any returned check. Checks will not be rerun and parents are expected to pick up the check and replace it with a money order within three days of being notified. After two returned checks, you will be asked to pay tuition with a money order.

Occasionally families have special situations arise which cause them to fall behind in their monthly tuition. In that event please call the school office and speak with the director about whether special payment arrangements can be made. We are happy to help you when possible.

## Discounts

- Multiple Child Discount: The Woodlands Tree House Preschool offers discounts for families having more than one child enrolled in the program at the same time. A 10% discount on the monthly tuition will be given to the second child and for each child who attends thereafter.

All tuition discounts are applied to the lowest monthly tuition only.

## Withdrawal and Dismissal

Withdrawal: During the school year, if a parent desires to withdraw a child from our program, the parents should inform the school in writing at least one month before the date of withdrawal. The May tuition deposit will be refunded with 30 days paid written notice of withdrawal. Account must be in good standing. Verbal notification of students intended withdrawal is not an official notification. Re-enrollment is based upon space availability and at the discretion

of the Director. In case of withdrawal prior to July 15th of the upcoming school year, the may tuition deposit will be refunded in full.

Dismissal: In certain circumstances it may be necessary to ask that a child leave The School. This decision will only be taken as a last resort after all other efforts of working with the child and his/her family have proven unsuccessful. Dismissal of a child may come as a result of his behavior being a danger to himself, other children, the staff and/or the school property.

Other incidents that may cause a family to be dismissed could be (but are not limited to):

- Disrespect toward teachers or school employees by child or parent.
- Continued violation of school policies.
- Nonpayment of tuition.
- Inability of the school to meet the child's health or educational needs.

Any child who is absent for more than 30 consecutive days without prior approval from the director and/or written communication from the parent will be automatically withdrawn and the deposit will not be refunded.

## OPERATIONAL POLICIES

### School Calendar

The Woodlands Tree House Preschool follows the Conroe Independent School District Calendar with the exception of the last day of school which will be determined once the Conroe ISD calendar is released (Dates may be changed at the discretion of the director). The school calendar can be found on our website. The school year runs August thru May with summer camps held in June and July. In the unlikely event that a change must be made to the approved school calendar an adequate parent notice will be given.

### Hours of Operation

The Woodlands Tree House Preschool hours of operation are as follows:

- Office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00am to 3:00pm.
- Preschool hours are Monday through Friday 9:00am to 2:00pm
- Transition hours are Monday through Friday 9:00am to 3:00pm
- Extended Day Program is Monday through Friday 7:30 to 9:00am and 2:00 to 5:00pm

Children cannot be dropped off earlier than 7:30am/9:00am unless enrolled in the early drop off program.

### School Closing/ Inclement Weather

In the event of bad weather or a national or community emergency, please tune in to local radio and television for closure information. If the Conroe ISD schools are closed due to bad weather or a national emergency, the Woodlands Tree House Preschool will also be closed. In the event we must close the school after the school day has begun because of a national emergency, electrical outage, plumbing or water cut-off, or for any other reason, the school office or child's teacher will call and notify parents that they must immediately



pick up their child. (The health department requires there be running water in order for school to be in session.) Make Up Days for excessive inclement weather days will be determined at the Director's discretion.

## Daily Schedules

The lead teacher is responsible for posting and maintaining a daily schedule of events for her classroom. This schedule should reflect segments of the day such as greeting upon arrival, snack time, outdoor time, motor, music, center time, and other such events indicative of the child's day. The daily schedule should be posted in a prominent location for parents to view when entering or leaving the classroom each day. When teachers leave their classrooms a sign indicating where they are will be posted on their door.

## Dress Code and Personal Items

Parents agree to provide their children with the school's uniform. All students must wear the school's uniform to school everyday, unless otherwise notified by the school. Khaki color pants, shorts or skirt and a blue sweater or jacket must be worn with a Woodlands Tree House Preschool white or navy blue polo shirt. Although every effort is taken to keep clothes from soiling, school is a place where children will get dirty. Tennis shoes or closed-toed shoes must be worn at all times. No sandals, boots, flip-flops, open-toed shoes or crocs of any kind are allowed. Remember, children will go outside everyday unless it is raining, so please dress children appropriately for the weather.

What to bring and NOT to bring to class

- A complete change of clothes, including socks, to be kept at school. If your child uses diapers, you must supply disposable diapers and baby wipes throughout the year.
- A backpack to transport valuable items and messages to/from home. (No Wheels) Please be sure the backpack is labeled. The children will wear their backpacks at dismissal, as we need their hands free.
- Toddlers and Twos may bring a comfort item if needed. Also they need to bring a cup with a sipping lid (no bottles allowed).
- These items must not be brought or sent to school in your child's backpack:
  1. Toys from home (these are easily lost, and not easily shared)
  2. NO FIDGET SPINNERS of any kind
  3. Medicine, hand sanitizer, and cough drops.

## Birthday Parties and Special Events

Holiday Parties are an integral part of the early childhood classroom and provide a good way for parents to volunteer in the classroom. There will be several celebrations throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to share their own holidays and traditions which will contribute to children's understanding of the cultural and ethnic diversity of our school.

A birthday is a meaningful event in a child's life and we are happy to assist you in making this day special. We encourage you to bring individual nutritious birthday treats ( baked goods or cookies WITHOUT icing or frosting are fine. No chocolate) or non-food treats for your child to share with classmates.

Please do not distribute your child's birthday party invitations at school unless all the children in the class are invited. For the safety of children, we ask that you do not bring balloons. You must sign up for your child's birthday at the front desk at least one week prior to the celebration.

Any snack provided by a parent on a special occasion such as birthdays must meet the needs of children who require special diets. WTHP requires parents to notify the school in advance of any outside food being brought in so that we can ensure that it is peanut free and safe for all children.

## Lunch and Snacks

Parents are responsible for providing their child's lunch everyday. We encourage parents to provide a healthy lunch. All toddlers should bring finger foods for self-feeding. Some suggestions are: a sandwich, crackers and cheese, raw vegetables and dip, fresh fruits and juices, yogurt and milk. Carbonated beverages, chips, chocolate or candy are not allowed. Unfortunately we do not have the facilities to reheat food, so all foods must be able to be eaten straight from the lunch box. The school is not responsible for the nutritional value of the lunch each child brings to school.

Woodlands Tree House Preschool is a PEANUT-FREE school which means that no peanuts, peanut butter or other peanut related foods should be brought to school as part of your children's lunch or special snacks. Some classrooms may be completely NUT-FREE. The School provides a daily snack and water for the children. Snacks follow licensing guidelines of nutritional needs for children. If your child has dietary restrictions or allergies, please be sure to let the teacher and office know. A list of snacks provided by the school is available at the front office and on our website.

It is stated in the Minimum Standards under 746.3317 that: children under 4 should not be served the following foods that present a risk of choking: hard candy, marshmallows, pretzels, whole grapes, nuts, seeds, popcorn, hotdogs, and chips.

## Discipline

Woodlands Tree House Preschool recognizes that young children are only learning to manage their emotions and control their reactions. For this reason, the school has adopted the Conscious Discipline curriculum to help children learn to express their feelings, cooperate with other children and negotiate conflicts. Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive self-regulation program that integrates social-emotional learning and discipline. It is the only program that integrates classroom management with social-emotional learning, utilizes everyday events as the curriculum and addresses the adult's emotional intelligence as well as the child's. Conscious Discipline empowers adults to consciously respond to daily conflict, transforming it into an opportunity to teach critical life skills to children.

Under no circumstance will a child be physically punished, threatened, or intimidated.

For more information on this program visit: [www.consciousdiscipline.com](http://www.consciousdiscipline.com)

## SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

The school reserves the right to an immediate suspension or expulsion of a child depending on various circumstances dealing with the child or the family at the discretion of the School's Director.

## Biting Policy

In the event of a biting incident, both parents will receive a report to make parents aware of the incident. Information on both children implicated in the biting will never be given to the other parents. A copy of the report will be placed in the children's files as with all incident reports.

Biting in very young children is most often a result of the frustration of the child not being able to communicate his/her needs/feelings. We will work with the family of the biting child to help resolve this issue.

The Woodlands Tree House Preschool reserves the right to suspend the enrollment of a child who continues to bite after all attempts of resolution have been made.

The protocol for a child who is biting will be determined on a case by case basis. However, if for any reason, a child bites more than 3 times and there has been no parent support in rectifying the situation, it will be cause for dismissal at the Director's discretion.

## Toilet Training

The goal of the Woodlands Tree House Preschool is to meet the needs of each child. Teachers will work with each child on an individual basis to assist efforts at home toward toileting success. Children need to be potty trained and be able to use the restroom independently in order to be able to enroll in the 3 year old classroom. No exceptions.

## Rest Time

Toddlers take a nap after lunch time. For children 3 years and older, because of the structure of our program, these children do not nap but quiet activities such as reading and storytelling are scheduled for this time of the day. Parents are responsible for providing all children a nap mat that should be brought to school by the first day. Plastic mats will be sanitized in school, but cloth nap rollers will be sent home every Friday to be washed and returned on Monday.

## Breastfeeding

A designated area will be provided for nursing mothers and their babies. Please contact the front office for more information.

## Outdoor and Water Activities

Outdoor play is an essential part of your child's day. The school provides daily scheduled supervised outdoor activities on age appropriate equipment. Please check the weather and dress your child accordingly.

Children will also participate in water activities during the warmer months. We require a signed authorization for the participation in such activities and the application of sunscreen or insect repellent.

## Lost and Found

Please be sure to LABEL everything that your child brings to school including all clothing, backpacks and lunch boxes. It is much easier to return a lost item if it is labeled. If your child is missing anything, please inquire at the school as soon as possible.

## ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

### Music and Movement

Music and Movement are inside each child from birth. Children love to explore music through body movement, singing, playing instruments and dancing.

Woodlands Tree House Preschool recognizes not only the joy children experience through music but also all the benefits music and movement bring to them. In addition to enhancing the curriculum that the classroom teachers are already using, our music program will help children learn music in ways that engage and delight them throughout the day.

Music and movement activities:

- increase both fine and gross motor skills
- help develop hand-eye coordination
- improve early language development
- increase self-esteem and confidence
- nurture creativity and self-expression
- cultivate sharing, self-regulation, and self-control
- establish appreciation for music and rhythm

### Spanish

Learning a second (third) language has shown to be extremely important in today's multi-cultural society. It not only enables children to better communicate but research has shown that children who learn a 2nd language at an early age will develop stronger language skills in English as well as improve their overall performance in other academic areas. Children at Woodlands Tree House Preschool are introduced to Spanish from the very beginning through an outstanding program.

Risas y Sonrisas is an extraordinary language program - creatively designed to be entertaining and rich in content. Kids are quickly immersed in Spanish and having a ball. Short of a trip abroad I can't imagine a better learning experience. Risas y Sonrisas uses a multi-media approach to teach and reinforce essential Spanish language skills in a way that is effective, versatile, and fun!

## Library

The library is a very special place at school -a place to teach children a love and appreciation for books and literature. A place where children will gain knowledge about things that interest them or simply enjoy stories. Through books, children travel through time and space learning about other countries, cultures, amazing animals and much more.

Children at WTHP will visit the library at least once a week. Storytime, reading and literature are also incorporated into their daily schedule. Books are meant for reading and there are many pre-reading concepts that children learn through their exposure to books that will help them become successful readers such as: stories are read from left to right and from top to bottom; sequencing; letter recognition; language patterns and development; new concepts and vocabulary; etc.

## HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

### Immunization and Medical Records

A health statement, provided in your enrollment packet, must be completed and signed by your child's physician every year. This statement together with your child's updated shot records must be kept on file in accordance with the Texas licensing requirements. Immunization records must include a signature by the doctor in the form of a rubber stamp or electronic signature.

You have the right to waive immunizations. To do so, a notarized state-required waiver must be provided in your child's enrollment packet.

Employees are encouraged to keep their immunizations up to date but it is not a requirement. All employees have a health care statement on file that has been signed by a health care professional.

### Vision and Hearing Screening

The State of Texas states that children enrolled in a facility who are four years of age on or before September 1 require a vision and hearing screening performed by a licensed professional. The results of the screening must be submitted to the school.

### Medication

Medication will be administered to a child while in school in accordance with the school policies and state regulations.

- Parents must complete and sign the Medication Authorization Form which will be kept in file in the office.
- Prescription medication must come in its original prescription bottle with accurate label information including child's name, doctor's name, date, exact dosage, name of medication.
- Over-the-counter medication will be administered to a child ONLY if it is in its

original bottle and dosage will be followed per container. No medication will be administered in a manner that is contrary to the label directions without a physician's written instructions.

Medication will be stored in the school office in a locked drawer, or in the school's refrigerator in a labeled container. Teachers will administer medication from the school office.

The use of sun screen or repellent can only be administered with written authorization from the parents.

## Illness

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to us. Licensing requires that precautions be taken to safeguard the health of all children enrolled.

If your child becomes ill at school, the front office will immediately contact you. Your child will be separated from the class and taken to the office where he will be given the appropriate attention and supervision until you arrive to take him home. Children must stay at home until he/she is free of all symptoms, without medication, for twenty four hours or until a child's physician indicates, in writing, that the child is free from a excludable disease and is able to return to school.

A child must stay home if:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
- The child shows symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, green nasal discharge, sore throat, eye drainage, abnormal breathing, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes.
- The child has a temperature of 100° or above.

Parents, please notify the office if your child is out sick due to a communicable disease so that the school can take the necessary precautions. The school will immediately notify parents, in writing, if any of the staff or a child has contracted a communicable disease that the local health department requires us to report.

## Lice

If a staff child is sent home with lice/nits, he/she will need to be treated at home and may return to school once treatment has been administered and there are no signs of lice/nits anymore. Once they return to school, they will be checked upon arrival for 3 consecutive days to ensure that they are free of lice/nits. If any lice/nits are found, they will need to go home.

## Student Minor Accidents

If your child suffers a minor injury in school, the teacher will treat the injury and send home a copy of the accident report explaining how the accident happened and the action taken. The original will be kept on file.

## Emergency Medical Procedures

In the case of a more severe injury the appropriate first aid measures will be taken immediately to care for the child, the parents will be notified, and if necessary parents will be asked to pick up the child for further medical treatment. Emergencies will result in a call to 911. It is very important that all telephone numbers and emergency information be kept current so that parents can be reached at all times. If cell phone numbers have been provided to the school, please be sure cell phones are turned on while your child is attending school.

## Children with Allergies

The Woodlands Tree House Preschool will make every reasonable effort to meet the needs of children with severe allergies. However, we cannot guarantee that your child will not come in contact with allergens. Please let the school office know, as well as your child's teacher, if your child has severe food allergies that require specific protocols such as antihistamine and/or epi-pen. Per the State of Texas licensing division, any child with a documented allergy must have an allergy plan signed by a physician on file. Any required medication is to be provided by the parent in its original container and the school's Medication Authorization form must be completed in order for us to administer treatment and in order for the child to attend school.

Any snack provided by a parent on a special occasion such as birthdays must meet the needs of children who require special diets.

## Washing Hands

The most important thing teachers and children can do to prevent the spread of illness is to wash hands thoroughly and often. Teachers are given guidelines regarding how and when to wash their hands. They teach the children to wash their hands:

- after any visit to the restroom or diaper change,
- before and after lunch or snacks,
- after using the sand/water/discovery table,
- after they come in contact with soiled items,
- after coming back from the playground,
- after handling any pets or animals, or
- any other occasion when hands may become dirty.

## SCHOOL SAFETY

### School Security and Safety

Woodlands Tree House Preschool has a CCTV security system installed. The cameras are for internal use only and are NOT connected to the internet or monitored by an external security company. The front door is locked and only opens with a code which is given to parents upon enrollment.

## Drop off and Pick Up Procedures

For the safety of our students, parents are encouraged to use the car line when dropping off and picking up their children (a map of our arrival and dismissal route will be provided). Early arrival and late dismissal will not have car line service, parents need to check them in and out at the front office.

Our regular program hours are 9:00 to 2:00pm and 9:00 to 3:00 for Transition. Extended day ends at 3:00pm/5:00pm. Please be on time to pick up your child. Any children picked up after 2:10pm or 3pm/5pm respectively if enrolled in after care will incur in a late fee which will be applied to your account as follows: The first minute is \$5 and each minute thereafter \$1 per minute. Habitual tardiness (5 times) will result in your child being removed from the extended day program.

## Car Line Procedures

When using the car line for arrival or dismissal please follow this simple car line policy:

1. Our driveway is one-way in using Ken Lakes Dr. and exiting our driveway onto Terramont Dr.
2. While waiting in the carline please do not block driveways or sidewalks.
3. Always display your child's car sign in the passenger windshield area. Car line is a "PHONE FREE ZONE", we need you to be attentive to your surroundings.
4. Children need to be placed on there passenger side.
5. Carline drop off starts at 8:55am. If you arrive after 9:10am, please park in the parking lot and walk your child to his/her class. Please do not park at the front entry of the school to drop off.
6. Pick up starts at 2:00pm. Please be prompt. (If car line is over when you pull up, you are LATE). Please park in the parking lot and walk in to pick up your child from the afternoon classroom.
7. Stay in your car at ALL TIMES when using the car line.
8. Pull up to the front of the entry guided by staff.
9. When it is your turn for the teacher to load/unload your child, please put your car in park and remain in your car. Staff will load/unload your children and will assist with car seats.
10. Do not let your child out of the vehicle until a staff member opens the door. Please cooperate with car line staff as they are there to make sure safety procedures are followed.

## Walking In Procedures

1. If you are not going to use the car line please follow these guidelines:
2. Park in the parking lot ONLY. Do not double park, block anyone in or use the car line area for parking.
3. When walking your child into the building, your are responsible to hold their hand at all times while in the parking/driveway area.
4. Please do not walk up to cars in the drop off zone to chat with other parents. This is very dangerous for the children.



5. Please be sure to leave your child with the classroom teacher or assistant upon arrival.
6. When picking up your child, please make sure to sign him/her out.

Parents should notify the office any time there is a change in the normal routine of the daily pick up, even if the person picking up is one of those who are designated on the enrollment form. In case of an emergency, please email the front office with the person's name and driver's license number. In any case, anyone picking up your child other than you must check in at the front office and show picture ID.

It is important that parents adhere to the hours of operation when dropping off and picking up children. Children who are picked up late will incur a late fee. As a courtesy to the staff and to your child, we ask that you call the school office and notify us if you are running late, so we can make any special arrangements necessary. Late charges are assessed with or without notification. Being consistently late in picking up your child will result in your child's dismissal from the program.

### Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome to visit any area of the school at any time during the day as long as the visit does not interrupt the child's ability to function with the class. All visitors will be asked to sign in at the front office and receive a pass before visiting the school.

### Photographs and Video

Pictures and Video taken of children during the school year will be used for school purposes only with written authorization from the parent or guardian.

### Fire/Emergency Evacuation Drills

The safety of children at The School is of the utmost importance. An emergency Preparedness Plan has been designed to ensure the safety of children during an emergency. Procedures are in place for emergencies such as fires, severe weather, medical emergencies, intruders, release of children, playground safety, and national alerts. Drills are conducted regularly by employees and children. A copy of the Emergency Preparedness plan is available for review at the front office.

In the unlikely event that children must be evacuated from the school building for any reason, Deretchin Elementary School, will be the place of relocation. Parents will be called to pick up children from there, and staff will remain with the children until all are picked up. Deretchin Elementary is located at 11000 Merit Oaks Dr. The Woodlands Texas 77382.

### Liability Insurance

The School meets all state requirements regarding insurance coverage for children enrolled in a licensed facility. Coverage is reviewed yearly by the Board and Executive Director.

# PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

## Classroom Open House/Meet the Teacher

Parents and children are invited to the school to meet the teacher and familiarize themselves with their classroom before the first day of school. Parents will be given a date and time to bring their child to the school and help them become acquainted with the teacher and the environment. Each family will be given 15 mins. so schedule accordingly. Date to be determined by Director and posted on the calendar.

## Parent Involvement

The School values the active involvement of parents in our programs, both as volunteers and experts in their own fields. Parents are welcomed to share their own talents, interests and knowledge to broaden the learning experiences of the children. There are many ways in which parents can become involved in school activities depending upon parent's availability, interests and the needs of the school.

WTHP HOMEROOM PARENTS – coordinate special events during the school year with the teacher/director and help to assist in the communication between the school and the classroom parents.

PARENT CONFERENCES – are held once a year in the preschool. The conference is held in February and is designed to let the parent know about the child's progress among other topics. An end of the year conference can be scheduled upon the request of the parent. Teachers will also call parents as needed throughout the school year, and parents are encouraged to call the school office and ask that teachers return a call, if needed.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT – is held one evening during the month of August and is hosted by each classroom teacher and assistant in the preschool. At this time the teacher will review the curriculum for the year and explain the goals. Parents will be given the opportunity to volunteer in many different areas. This meeting also provides time to meet the parents of the other children in the classroom.

DONUTS FOR DADS – is held in May. Fathers are invited to enjoy breakfast with their child. If Dad is unable to attend, another male relative or friend is welcome to accompany the child.

MOTHER'S DAY – is held around Mother's Day weekend in May. This event features refreshments and entertainment prepared by the children and their teachers. Grandmothers are also extended an invitation to the Tea.

BOOK FAIR – is held in the fall. Parents are asked to sponsor this event and volunteer to man the fair. Parents are encouraged to come to the book fair as a family and take the opportunity to select books for home and school. This event allows the school the opportunity to receive books for the school library.

## Communication

Woodlands Tree House Preschool believes that close communication with the parents is a key factor in the children's success. We encourage parents to read the monthly newsletter published on our website which offers information about child development, home related activities and upcoming events.

## Social Media (Facebook)

A school Facebook page has been set up and important school information is posted. We encourage parents to check the page for updates and important event information. NO children photos will be posted at any time.

## Family Expectations

Just as we set guidelines for appropriate behavior of children, we also must ensure that parents and other adults who come to our schools know what our expectations are in terms of their interactions with our staff, other children, and parents.

**APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE IN SCHOOL** Parents/Guardians and their guests must use appropriate language while on school property. Foul language of any type is not permitted on school grounds, which includes our parking lots and playgrounds.

**SMOKING** Smoking is prohibited on all school property, including parking lots and playgrounds.

**PHYSICAL AND VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN ON SCHOOL PROPERTY** We do not allow parents or their guests to use any type of corporal punishment on any child, whether enrolled in our program or not, while on school property. This includes our parking lots, playgrounds, and bathrooms. Further, while verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for a parent to verbally abuse their child while on our premises. Doing so can cause undue embarrassment and emotional distress to a child. Violations of this policy will result in immediate disenrollment from our program. Parents and their guests are also prohibited from addressing or disciplining a child that is not their own. If you have a concern about the behavior of another child at our school, please bring your concern to a member of management who will address your concern and resolve the issue.

**FIREARMS AND WEAPONS BAN ON SCHOOL PROPERTY** At no time is any person permitted to possess firearms, ammunition, or other weapons on school property, or at events sponsored by the school. For persons authorized to carry concealed weapons, we respectfully request that any/all weapons be left in your vehicle during the period of time when you are in the school. Any violation of this policy may result in immediate disenrollment from our program, as well as criminal prosecution.

**CUSTODY AND VISITATION ISSUES** It is our policy to not interfere with the custody relationship of a child's parents. As such, we assume that both parents/guardians have equal rights to pick-up/drop-off, visit, or request documents about their child. If that is not the case, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide court documents and/or legally binding parental agreements to clarify the rights and responsibilities of the parents and/or guardians. We will

follow the last dated court documents, without prejudice, to either parent/guardian. We ask that parents/guardians keep the school, our staff, and other children out of any legal entanglements or other custodial issues and resolve these issues in another forum. Failure to adhere to this request may result in disenrollment.

**STAFF HIRED BY PARENTS** In the event that you enter into an agreement with a Company employee to babysit for your family outside of the employee's normal works hours and/or outside of the school hours, it must be done away from the school and with full knowledge and understanding that the sitter enters into such an agreement as a private citizen and not as a Company employee. We cannot be responsible for our employees away from the school, outside their working hours, and will not be liable for their acts or omissions when not on our property. In addition, staff is absolutely prohibited from transporting any children to or from the school in their personal vehicles without a signed Release of Liability form from the parent/guardian.

**PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS OR ALCOHOL** If a parent or other adult enters the school to pick up a child and appears to be intoxicated either by the smell of alcohol or his or her actions appear to be impaired, we may refuse to release the child to them and call another contact on the emergency contact list to pick up the child. If the intoxicated individual becomes aggressive or unruly, the Director may notify the local authorities.

## Resolution of Disputes

It is in the best interest of children, families, teachers, and the school for concerns and complaints to be addressed in a timely and professional manner. For parents who have a concern or complaint about a school-related issue, please follow the procedure in this order:

- Speak to your child's teacher first. If not resolved to your satisfaction,
- Speak to the Director next. If not resolved to your satisfaction,
- Finally, you may write a letter to the chairperson of The Board. The Board has the final decision in all matters pertaining to The School. After a decision is rendered, the chairperson will send a response to the parent, in writing.

## LICENSING AND LEGAL REGULATIONS

### State Licensing

The School is licensed by the Department of Family and Protective Services of the State of Texas. All of the guidelines for operating procedures, administration of the school, and laws are outlined in the Minimum Standards (revised 2017).

Each licensed center is responsible to a licensing representative who visits the facility on a regular basis. A copy of the Minimum Standards and the most recent inspection report are available for parents' review and are located in the school office.

If you have questions about the services provided by this center, or Childcare Licensing, you may call the Childcare Information Line at 1 800

862-5252 or visit their website at [www.tdprs.state.tx.us](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us), or the Child Abuse Hotline at 1 800 252-5400.

## Reporting Child Maltreatment

If you suspect any child is being neglected or abused, Texas Law requires you to report it immediately to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. An anonymous and confidential report can be made by calling 1-800-252-5400. Per state requirements, the Woodlands Tree House Preschool Director or Owner must report to Child Protective Services any situation in which it appears a child is being neglected or abused outside of the facility. All staff are required to have annual training on Child Maltreatment as part of their training.

## Student Information Confidentiality

The Confidential Information Form is designed for the use of your child's teachers. It helps us understand your child so that we might meet individual needs. Please fill it out as completely as possible and turn it in prior to the beginning of school. The confidential information form will be reviewed by the Executive Director and shared with your child's teacher and/or any other individual with an educational interest in your child, such as Texas Department of Family and Regulatory Services, or any other governmental agency as applicable. Before sharing information with an outside agency the school must receive written consent from the family.

## Changes to School Policies

Woodlands Tree House Preschool reserves the right to change or amend at its sole discretion this Parent Handbook at anytime and without notice to comply with governmental requirements or for any other reason necessary. In the event of a policy change, parents will be notified in writing.

## NEW REQUIREMENTS REGARDING GANG-FREE ZONE INFORMATION For Child Care Centers

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code will be amended to include Section §42.064 requiring that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed child care centers. The following is a tip sheet to assist in complying with the new law. This information may be posted at your child care operation or copies may be provided to parents.

What is a gang-free zone?

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where certain gang related activity is prohibited and is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. Specific locations where certain gang related criminal activity is now prohibited include, but are not limited to, public schools, playgrounds, video arcade facilities, and day care centers.

The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of

location. For example, certain gang-related criminal activity that occurs within 300 feet of a video arcade facility is a violation of the new law, whereas certain gang-related criminal activity that occurs within 1000 feet of a school or day care center is a violation of the law.

How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends?

The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care program. Maps may be produced for the purposes of prosecution and may be updated by the local municipal or county engineer. Parents may contact their local municipality to attempt to obtain a copy of the map if they choose to do so.

Why are gang-free zones needed?

Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the goal of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

What does this mean for my day care center?

Child care providers are required to inform parents or guardians of children attending their center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your program is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty.

When do I have to comply with the new requirements?

The law is already in effect and providers should begin sharing information regarding gang-free zones immediately. Licensing staff will be offering technical assistance to facilitate compliance until rules are proposed and adopted, which is estimated to occur in March 2010. In the meantime, providers may want to update their operational policies and procedures to include information mandated by this law.