



woodlands
TreeHouse
preschool

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024

www.woodlandstreehouse.com
Educating for a Brighter Future...

OUR SCHOOL	5
Mission and Philosophy	5
Goals	5
Organizational Structure	5
Accreditation	5
Curriculum	5
English/ Spanish Bilingual Program for 3's and 4's	6
Teacher Qualifications and Training	6
ENROLLMENT AND TUITION GUIDELINES	6
Non-Discriminatory Policy	6
Registration	6
Classroom Divisions and Groupings	7
Enrollment Requirements	7
Tuition	8
Payment Methods	8
Returned Checks	8
Discounts	8
Withdrawal and Dismissal	8
OPERATIONAL POLICIES	9
School Calendar	9
Hours of Operation	9
School Closing/ Inclement Weather	9
Daily Schedules	10
Dress Code and Personal Items	10
Birthday Parties and Special Events	10
Lunch and Snacks	11
Discipline	11
Biting Policy	12
Toilet Training	12
Rest Time	12
Breastfeeding	12
Outdoor and Water Activities	12
Lost and Found	13
ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES	13
Music and Movement	13
Spanish	13

Library	14
HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION	14
Immunization and Medical Records	14
Vision and Hearing Screening	14
Medication	14
Illness	15
Lice	15
Student Minor Accidents	15
Emergency Medical Procedures	16
Children with Allergies	16
Washing Hands	16
SCHOOL SAFETY	17
School Security and Safety	17
Drop off and Pick Up Procedures	17
Car Line Procedures	17
Walking In Procedures	18
Open Door Policy	18
Photographs and Video	18
Fire/Emergency Evacuation Drills	18
Liability Insurance	19
PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT	19
Classroom Open House/Meet the Teacher	19
Parent Involvement	19
Communication	20
Social Media (Facebook)	20
Family Expectations	20
Resolution of Disputes	21
LICENSING AND LEGAL REGULATIONS	22
State Licensing	22
Reporting Child Maltreatment	22
Student Information Confidentiality	22
Changes to School Policies	23
NEW REQUIREMENTS REGARDING GANG-FREE ZONE INFORMATION	
For Child Care Centers	23
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/DRILLS	24
COVID ADDENDUM	28

Social Distancing Strategies	28
Intensified Cleaning and Disinfection Efforts	28
Implement Screening procedures upon arrival	28

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

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

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. All employees are cross trained to support other classrooms when needed.

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
- Private Kindergarten - 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, pandemics 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 that 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.
- Non payment 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
- Kindergarten 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 and snacks 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, 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 or snack each child brings to school. Children should also bring a water bottle which will be refilled as needed throughout the day. Water only - no juice.

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 as part of our integrated curriculum but it is not intended to substitute snacks provided by parents. 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

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. In the case of extreme weather conditions that prohibit outdoor play, the children will receive moderate to vigorous activity in the classroom and/or gym.

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, and include the doctor's name, address and phone number.

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 sever 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 incident report explaining how the incident

happened and the action taken. The original will be kept on file and a copy will be sent home in the child's backpack.

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. The Incident/Illness Report (Form 7239) should be completed and signed by the parent within 48 hours.

Should your child have an injury that results in them coming to school with any type of medical device, such as a boot, cast, helmet, etc., the school will require orders from the doctor and these orders must be followed.

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

Per licensing requirements all exterior door and gates are kept locked at all times and teachers have keys to exit in case of emergency. There is an emergency plan in place for all types of emergencies and regular emergency drills are done on a monthly basis. The front door is locked and only opens with a code which is given to parents upon enrollment and is changed every year.

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 3:00pm for Kinder. 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.
4. Car line is a "PHONE FREE ZONE", we need you to be attentive to your surroundings.
5. Children need to be placed on their passenger side.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Stay in your car at ALL TIMES when using the car line and DO NOT pass other cars that are being loaded or unloaded unless directed to do so by a staff member.
9. Pull up to the front of the entry guided by staff.
10. 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.

11. 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.
 12. Please cooperate with carline staff as they are there to make sure safety procedures are followed.
- No child will be loaded into a vehicle without the proper child safety seat.

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, you 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 schedule 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, 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 required by DFPS. Methods for parent awareness, prevention techniques, strategies for coordination between community organizations and how to obtain assistance and intervention are offered throughout the school year via email.

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.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/DRILLS

EMERGENCY SAFETY BINDER

Each teacher has been given an Emergency Safety Binder which should remain in the room to be used by the teacher, teacher assistant, or substitute on duty. This folder should contain the following documents:

- Emergency procedures and evacuation routes for the classroom (also should be posted on the wall)
- Emergency form for each child which includes parent contact information, proper authorization for release of child, and important medical information.
- Classroom roster or class list of students
- Schedules for motor development, music, and daily activities
- Special information relating to the proper release of children
- Any forms or information needed to successfully complete a day of teaching
- Information related to educating special needs students in the classroom
- Information related to medical needs or allergies of students in the classroom (also should be posted on the wall)

These binders are to be kept up to date with information which would be made available to a substitute in the event of staff illness. Please replace the forms in the book as they get low and update the rosters and lists when necessary. These folders are kept above the sink of every classroom and are never to be taken home. Copies of enrollment information can be made and kept at home as a reference for teachers.

These binders must be taken when you leave the building for any emergency situation (such as a fire drill). Your classroom key will unlock the external playground gates for emergency exit so be sure the key is with you when you exit the building.

ESCAPE PLAN

An escape plan is posted in each classroom, consisting of written instructions and a map with red arrows showing the quickest way out, as well as alternative exits.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Emergency phone numbers are kept in the binders and posted at the front office. Included are fire, police, ambulance, child abuse and poison control. Our address is also included so it can be quickly recited in an emergency. You can dial "911" from your classroom.

FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

You can expect at least one fire drill per month; the Administrative Staff strives to hold fire drills during different program segments of the day so that all staff are efficient in proper evacuation procedures. The School is on a monitored fire alarm system, which communicates directly with the fire department. If a child accidentally pulls a fire alarm, you must notify The School office and immediately evacuate the building just as if it was a real fire.

1. At the sound of the fire alarm gather all children in your class together and proceed out of the classroom according to the evacuation route posted on the wall. If you are not in your classroom, please follow the route posted in the room where you are.
2. Please note that there are primary and secondary routes. Follow primary route unless instructed to do otherwise. In the case of an actual fire, follow the route that leads your class to safety the quickest way.
3. Once at your safe destination, be sure to account for all children and staff members in your class. Remain at your destination until the danger has past and you have been given the signal to return to the building. The Director or her/his designee will tell you when to return to the building.

The evacuation procedures should be posted in every classroom. Please familiarize yourself with the primary and secondary evacuation routes. If the evacuation procedures are not in the classroom please notify The School office immediately for replacement.

The fire extinguishers, flashlight, smoke detectors, smoke alarms, and first aid kits are checked by the Administrative Staff on a monthly basis to be sure they are in good working order; if you find that one of these items is not working properly or is missing prior to the monthly check, notify The School office immediately so they can be replaced. The fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are inspected on an annual basis by the fire department and authorized personnel.

Also have children practice "Stop, Drop, and Roll" in case their clothes catch on fire. Tape a large cloth or paper "flame" to their clothes to make the experience more concrete.

Other emergency drills should be role played with your children, also. For example, let them know what to do when a child gets hurt outside.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

An ambulance will be summoned and directed to Memorial Hospital - The Woodlands unless otherwise specified by parent or physician.

In case of an emergency situation, follow these procedures:

1. Remain calm. Reassure the victims and others at the scene.
2. Remove uninjured children from the scene.
3. Stay at the scene, administer appropriate first aid until the Director arrives.
4. Do not move a severely injured or ill person except to save a life.
5. If necessary, call 911. Give all the important information slowly and clearly. To make sure that you have given all the necessary information, wait for the other party to hang up first.

6. Arrange for transportation of the injured person by ambulance or other vehicle, if necessary. Do not drive unless accompanied by another adult. Bring your emergency forms with you.
7. The Director will notify parents of the emergency and agree on a course of action with the parents.
8. If parent cannot be reached, notify parent's emergency contact person and call the physician shown on the child's emergency form.
9. Be sure that a responsible individual from the program stays with the child until the parents take charge.
10. Fill out the Emergency Information sheet and give a copy to the EMS personnel to take with them.
11. Fill out an Incident/Illness Report form (Form 7239) immediately, and give it to the Director. A copy must be given to the parent after the director's review.
12. Director must contact the Texas Department of Protective & Regulatory Services within 48 hours regarding any incident requiring treatment by a health care professional.

OTHER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

SEVERE WEATHER/SHELTERING

In severe weather, the Director will notify each classroom to proceed to nearest hallway, room, or bathroom, which is without exterior windows or glass doors. Remain there with children until you are given further instructions. Children should sit on the floor with their heads down. Specific instructions will be posted in each classroom. The School conducts severe weather drills every 3 months.

CHEMICAL RELEASE

In the event of any toxic chemical release, air conditioners will be turned off and doors and windows closed. Any air leaks will be sealed with towels, blankets, coats, etc. until further instructions are received from Civil Defense.

PLANS FOR EMERGENCY "LOCK DOWN"

In the unlikely event of an intruder entering our facility, teacher discretion will require immediately securing the children in a locked room, or evacuating through the windows. If possible notify the school office and wait for help to come to you. Emergency directions from public safety officials would be followed. The School conducts lock down drills every 3 months.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Remain calm!
2. Stay with your students (If you are not with them when an emergency lock down is signaled, immediately return to your students.)
3. Locate your emergency supplies:
 - Emergency Folder
 - Flashlight
 - Diapers and wipes
 - Purses
 - Cell phones, radio

- Keys
- 4. Close your windows, blinds and doors and evacuate to your assigned location. Put backpacks on children and bring lunches, snack and your emergency supplies!

OFFICE STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Signal the emergency and notify the authorities (call 911), unless they notify us first
2. Lock exterior doors
3. Locate emergency supplies:
 - Keys
 - Duct Tape
 - Purses
 - Cell Phones
 - First Aid Kit
 - Megaphone
4. Fill cart with available snacks and beverages
5. Confirm all rooms have been evacuated
6. Seal exterior doors, if possible.
7. If time permits, post emergency message on website and reception phone
8. Signal the all-clear when emergency has passed

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.

COVID ADDENDUM

Social Distancing Strategies

Drop off and Pick up Procedures

Staggering times for drop off and pick up procedures will be: 8:00am, 9:00am, 2:00pm and 3:00pm

Drop off and Pick up will be done outside of the school.

Intensified Cleaning and Disinfection Efforts

Diapering: Following all minimum standards guidelines in addition to washing hands of the child and caregiver before diapering. Post diapering procedures in all diapering areas.

Food Preparation: Snacks will be served individually and not as family style.

Cleaning: Rooms will be disinfected each morning, afternoon and one other time during the school day in addition to the cleaning service coming each night.

Environmental Health: Adjust the HVAC to allow fresh air into operation; limit machine washable cloth toys to one group at a time and launder before another group uses it. Post signs describing hand washing steps near all sinks.

Soiled clothing requirements: Ensure all children have multiple changes of clothing available in order to change any clothing with secretions on it. If clothes become soiled with both secretions you must:

1. Wash the child and caregivers hands
2. Not allow a child to wear another child's clothing
3. Place contaminated clothing in a sealed plastic bag to send home with the child or caregiver or wash in a washing machine at operation.

Implement Screening procedures upon arrival

Conduct daily screenings anyone who enters the operation and denying entry to those who fail the screening criteria which are:

1. Temperature of 100.0 or higher
2. Cough
3. Shortness of Breath
4. Difficulty breathing
5. Chills
6. Repeated shaking with chills
7. Muscle Pain
8. Headache
9. Soar throat
10. Loss of taste or smell
11. Diarrhea
12. Known contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID

Anyone with the above symptoms are not permitted to be in the building until 72 hours have passed since recovery.

Per emergency State of Texas licensing orders.