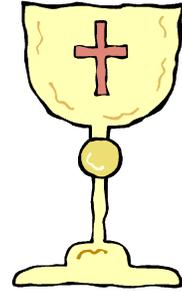




Parent's Handbook

The Children's Academy



Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a child centered educational program, at a reasonable tuition, that will honor God in a high quality Christian based environment benefiting both our children and our parents.

Children's Behavior Philosophy

I will respect myself as well as others. I will respect their bodies, their minds, their works, and their personal goods.

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Dear Parent,

We welcome you, and your child, to The Children's Academy. We look forward to developing a strong and positive relationship with you. We believe that communication, between parents and our staff, is essential to fully meeting your child's needs. The Children's Academy is proud to provide a nurturing, Christian environment filled with warmth and encouragement. Our developmentally appropriate programs support imagination and a natural love of learning. Our programs combined with our skilled, trained staff allow your child's physical, social, emotional, and mental development to progress smoothly and naturally. The Children's Academy prides itself on hiring and keeping well trained, quality, professional staff members.

The Children's Academy was started in 1995 and grew out of Overland Stage Children's Academy which began in 1983. There are two locations one in Mansfield and one in Arlington. The Children's Academy, of Southwest Arlington, was formally Overland Stage Children's Academy. The Children's Academy Community of Hope Campus is a partnership between TCA and the Community of Hope United Methodist Church in Mansfield.

Please review the following information and keep this handbook for future reference. We look forward to a long relationship with you and your child.

You can get additional information about the schools by visiting our web site at www.tcacademy.org.

Thank You,

The Children's Academy Staff

The Children's Academy

ENTERING THE CHILDREN'S ACADEMY

EDUCATION & CURRICULUM:

A Positive Learning Experience:

The Children's Academy specializes in pre-school education. Children from the age of 6 weeks old to 5 years of age are accepted for enrollment. When The Children's Academy has no vacancies, families may join a waiting list for future enrollment of their children. The priority waiting list is for parents who already have a child attending one of our schools and members of the Community of Hope United Methodist Church. Vacancies are filled from the top of the priority list first and then from the top of the general list.

No child at The Children's Academy shall be denied benefits or discriminated against because of religious belief, color, nationality or gender.

Our goal for each family entering our school is to leave feeling that their child has personally benefited by attending and that our childcare center has been a positive and rewarding experience.

How Classrooms are assigned:

Age and developmental stage determine how children are assigned to classrooms. Each class has a primary teacher. Our program is based on each child's social, emotional, and physical developmental needs. When a child is ready for an older group, parents are advised as to when the child should be transferred to another class. We believe that children are happy and secure when they have plenty of opportunities to succeed each day. This promotes self-confidence and as a result they develop into well-rounded adults.

Infants (Community of Hope Campus Only)

Babies are enrolled in the Infant Classroom at six weeks of age and generally will move out at approximately one year of age. The Infants are on their own schedule. They will eat when they are hungry and sleep when they are tired. Parents are responsible for bringing their own diapers and wipes. We are enrolled in the USDA Federal Food Program. We provide infant cereal; Parent's Choice Iron fortified infant formula, vegetables and fruit. If you prefer to bring your infant's food, you may sign a form at the time of enrollment stating you will provide your babies food. Each baby has his or her own crib. Sheets are changed daily and toys are disinfected daily as well. Parents should fill out the daily infant sheet when they arrive in the morning and pick up the sheet when they leave at night. Please make sure you Infant's feeding schedule is updated and signed once every 30 days.

The Infant curriculum centers around large motor skills, fine motor skills, music, and language. There is a great deal of floor time spent with every baby every day and a baby is not left in his or her crib if they are awake.

Toddler 1

Children will enter Toddler 1 at approximately the age of 12 months and will remain until approximately 18 months. Toddler 1 is the classroom that the School uses to transition the children from the Infant's schedule to the School schedule. Toddler 1's will go down for nap on mats at 12:30. Lunch is served at 11:30 AM. The parent is still responsible for diapers, and wipes. Toys in Toddler 1 are disinfected daily.

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The Toddler 1 curriculum centers on physical skills. Music and story time are very important at this age. We begin to introduce Spanish as a second language.

Toddler 2

Children that are 18 months to approximately 24 months are in the Toddler 2 class. Toddlers 2's are now on the center's schedule and food. They receive breakfast, an afternoon snack and a prepared nutritional lunch every day. Parents are still required to supply diapers and wipes. Nap time is at 12:30 PM and Toddler 2's sleep on mats.

In Toddler 2 the curriculum starts working on memorization and flash cards. Simple words, letters of the alphabet, and numbers are introduced. Spanish sentences are demonstrated and Spanish words are taught. Music is two days a week and Spanish is taught one day a week. Bible stories are taught every day. Toddler 2's will receive daily physical education classes.

Two's

The children are generally 24 to 36 months old. Most potty training takes place in the two's class. Parents will find that pull-ups, rather than diapers, work best in this classroom. Parents are still responsible for supplying wipes. Class starts at 8:30 AM, and parents are encouraged to have their children in class at that time.

The Pinnacle Christian curriculum is the core academic program we use. Art is now a major part of learning and is taught 3 days a week. Spanish is taught 3 days a week and bible stories every day of the week.

Pre Kindergarten

To enter the Pre-K class a child must be a minimum of three years of age and must be completely potty trained. The Pre-K Class has children that are ages three and four. Our Pre-K Classrooms operate on a child mentoring system similar to the Montessori Method. The older children help to teach and mentor the younger children. This helps the younger children learn much faster and allows the older child to develop very important leadership and teaching skills, while at the same time solidifying what they have already learned. This is a great opportunity for the children to demonstrate mutual respect towards each other and with the adults they come in contact with throughout the day.

Spanish is taught 3 days a week, Bible Stories each day, music twice a week, and art three times a week. The Christian based Pinnacle Curriculum is used in the Pre-School Classroom. The works in the room are designed to develop a specific skill in each child.

Classroom Environment:

Our center is clean, safe, and well planned. Our administrators and teachers are responsible for ensuring this. 100% of our staff is First Aid and CPR certified. We provide activities specially designed for each child's developmental level. Our child sized restroom facilities, sinks and equipment help promote self reliance and confidence. Your child will be enriched with age appropriate toys, art, books, and computers. Because of possession problems outside toys are not allowed in the school. The first time a child brings a toy to school the teacher will pick up the toy and return it to the parent during pickup. The second time a child brings a toy to school it will become property of the school. The exception to this is organized show and tell days and stuffed animals that are used during nap time.

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Positive Guidance/Discipline:

Our program is designed to encourage independence and self-control. We focus on positive reinforcement. If minor behavior problems occur the child will be redirected. We will help each child to understand what they feel and use appropriate methods to handle those feelings. When necessary, parent conferences may be requested. Discipline at our center is aimed on teaching the child self-control. When a child refuses to cooperate with the teacher that child is placed in "thinking time" where they can observe but not participate with the group. The child will be allowed to return to the group when they are willing to cooperate. The Children's Academy staff will work with parents in solving behavioral problems. If a child or parent persists in behavior which is detrimental to other children or the center that family may be dismissed from enrollment without notice.

Our Staff:

Members of our staff are carefully selected, trained, and evaluated to ensure that they conform to The Children's Academy philosophy of childcare. Each teacher must have the skills to meet the early education needs of children. Our teachers receive ongoing training to reinforce their childcare and early education skills. We also provide training for CPR and First Aide certification.

We support the professional development of our staff. Every staff member is required to complete training goals each year of their employment. Each goal is directed to improve curriculum, social interaction, and health and safety.

GENERAL POLICIES:

Outdoor Play:

Each room's daily schedule includes two outdoor periods (infants to pre-school). If the temperature is 32 degrees or above, wind chill is taken into consideration, and the ground is not damp or wet, the children will go outside twice a day. In the summer months, if the temperature is not in excess of 100 degrees, the children will go outside, for at least a portion of their outside time.

Nutrition:

Breakfast will be served each day from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are provided to each child enrolled at no additional cost. Menus for breakfast, lunch, and snacks are posted on the bulletin board and on the internet at www.tcacademy.org for your convenience. You may also pick up a copy at the front desk. Lunch is served at 11:30 AM and snack is served at 2:30 PM. An alternative meal can be provided to children with a medical allergy or for religious reasons providing we have a doctor's prescription or clergy statement on file. Parents that breast feed may bring breast milk for their child to consume throughout the day, or may breast feed in their child's classroom at any time.

The school is enrolled in the Federal Food Program and as a result there is no outside food allowed at the center. Every enrolled family must fill out the federal food program paper work and CCMS families must put down the income information.

Programs:

Open House is held once a year. During open house the children present their academic and art work. Time is made available for parents and family to visit with all staff members. School parties are scheduled annually usually around Holidays or Special Events. Parents are encouraged to participate by attending or by helping with the party menu.

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Transportation:

The Children's Academy does not transport children except in the case of medical emergencies when directed by a health care professional.

Enrollment Forms:

Parents must supply The Children's Academy with the following information: completed application, permission to participate in water activities, authorization to obtain emergency medical care and emergency transportation, statement of special needs, permission for sibling under age 18 to pick up. Also needed are name, address, and telephone number of child's physician, health and immunization records (immunization records must be current at all times), and any other information required by the Texas Department of Human Services that oversees and issues licenses to child care centers.

Vision and Hearing Screening:

In October, of the year the child turns four before September 1, every parent must supply TCA with a form stating that their child has been screened for vision and hearing by a health care professional.

Policy, Procedures and Communication:

If, at any time, you have any questions or concerns regarding the classroom or our policies, please contact a Director. We are happy to sit down and discuss any problems you may have and solve them to the best of our ability.

Each parent will receive a copy of The Children's Academy Policy and Procedures / Parent's Handbook. Upon signing, you will agree that you have read and will adhere to the policies set forth. The policies and procedures are subject to change. In the event of any changes, a two-week notice will be given to parents in writing. Each family must sign a document stating they received the notice of policy change. Notices and information will be mailed, emailed, placed in the child's cubby, or posted on the web site.

Visiting Policy:

The Children's Academy has an open door policy and a parent may visit at anytime. We encourage each parent to get involved with his or her child's classroom. School parties are scheduled annually and parents are encouraged to participate. We also hold Open House once a year so that children can show off their work. Teachers can be available, upon request, for any parent-teacher conferences.

Minimum Standards:

A Copy of the State Minimum Standards is available at the Front Office and also online for parent viewing. A copy of each licensing review is posted at the parent communication center in the school.

The Fort Worth Office of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services / Childcare Licensing Division is located at 1501 Circle Drive, Suite 310 Ft. Worth, TX 76119. The phone number is 817-321-8604.

The abuse hotline for the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is 1-800-252-5400

We understand that from time to time, a parent feels the need to contact TDFPS. However, keeping the children safe, happy and the parents satisfied is very important to us. Please try to resolve your problem with the schools director first.

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Child Abuse:

It is the responsibility of the staff and parents at The Children's Academy to report any sign of child abuse to the proper authorities. In some instances the state may direct us not to inform the parents of the report. Please understand we are legally obligated to comply with these guidelines.

Animals:

The Children's Academy does not have animals on the premises.

Water Activities:

The Children's Academy offers only a Splash Day during the summer months for Children age two and older. There are no other water activities at The Children's Academy.

Emergency Preparedness:

The emergency plan for The Children's Academy is available for review at the front office. Please ask the center Director for the document.

TUITION AND FEES:

Regular Tuition:

All tuition is automatically billed and draft collected on Wednesday, in advance, for the next week. All families must have current credit card or ach draft information on file at all times. Weekly cash or check payments must be made by close of business Tuesday to avoid drafting the credit card or ach account. If tuition is not paid in full, by close of business Friday, a late charge of twenty-five dollars will be added to the account. If the tuition and late fee are not paid, in full Monday morning the child will not be allowed to be dropped off until the account is paid in full. If a credit card payment or ach payment is denied, it is the same as a NSF check and there will be a thirty five dollar NSF fee. If a credit card or ach payment is denied twice in one month, only cash payments by close of business Tuesday will be accepted in the future. All tuition, once paid, is considered earned when paid and is non-refundable. See the tuition schedule for the actual tuition in each classroom.

CCMS Tuition:

CCMS Parents are responsible for swiping their family card every day at drop off and pick up time. In the case of part time or absence the parent is responsible for swiping their family card or calling CCMS and making the necessary adjustments. All CCMS swipes for the week must be completed by close of business Thursday. If there are days from the previous week not accounted for as of Monday morning the parent will be responsible for paying \$35 per child per day before the child or children we be allowed to attend.

Activity & Supply Fees:

There is an activity, supply, and equipment fee charged each month. This fee helps cover the cost of special activities, the supplies and equipment used in each classroom. The activity, supply, and equipment fee will be billed to accounts and paid on the Wednesday before the first of each month. All families, including CCMS families, must pay the activity, supply, and equipment fees, these fees cannot be prorated based on attendance.

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Breakfast:

There is no outside food allowed in the center. Breakfast will be served each day between 7:00 AM and 8:00 AM. Breakfast is included in the weekly tuition.

Late Pick Up:

Hours of operation are 6:30 AM - 6:15 PM. Parents are responsible for having their child picked up no later than 6:30 PM. After 6:30 PM the late charge is \$1.00 per minute and must be paid when you pick up.

Holidays:

The school is closed for the following holidays: Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, New Years Day, Memorial Day, July Fourth, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving Day. All holidays are observed according to the Federal Holidays Act. For purposes of tuition and vacation all Holidays count as a full day of attendance.

Vacation:

Children enrolled in our Full Time Educational Program are allowed vacation time. Part time children do not receive vacation time. A Full time family will receive two vacation weeks per calendar year after the child has attended for six months. Vacation time does not carry over from one calendar year to the next. Vacation week tuition is 70% of the regular tuition. A child cannot attend the center during a vacation week.

Leaving the Program:

To allow the center to have a smooth transition of classes and to notify parents on the waiting list a two-week written notice or two weeks tuition with written notice is required for a child to withdraw. Tuition will continue to be charged until written notice is received. There are no exceptions to this policy. If your child is continually disruptive to the classroom, purposely hurts other children or the staff, or destroys school property they can be expelled from the program with no notice. Any tuitions or fees that are prepaid will not be refunded.

Hiring Staff:

If you hire a Children's Academy staff member for purposes of private baby-sitting The Children's Academy accepts no responsibility for that employee while they are under your supervision. As a parent you also agree not to hire The Children's Academy staff away from the center. Both, you and the staff member, will be held liable for actual damages including loss of tuitions.

DAILY OPERATIONS:

The Children's Academy is open year round Monday through Friday, from 6:30 AM to 6:15 PM. The school is actually open until 6:30 but the last 15 minutes are used for cleaning and preparing for the next day.

Bad Weather Days:

We will be open for business on bad weather days. If the public school district, that the center is located in, closes due to bad weather or opens late, we will open The Children's Academy at 8:30 AM and close at 5:00 PM. Please call ahead to assure that an employee has arrived to open the center or check the web site at www.tccademy.org.

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Emergency Relocation (Community of Hope Campus):

In the event of an emergency evacuation The Children's Academy Community of Hope Campus will relocate to The Children's Academy South West Arlington Campus at 4601 Hawkins Cemetery Road Arlington, TX 76017 817-478-4495. A complete emergency plan is available for you to review in the front office.

Emergency Relocation (South West Arlington Campus):

In the event of an emergency evacuation The Children's Academy / South West Arlington Campus will relocate to The Children's Academy / Community of Hope Campus at 1800 East Debbie Lane Mansfield, TX 76063 817-473-8585. A complete emergency plan is available for you to review in the front office.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Illness & Medication:

Please notify the staff when your child will be absent. If the child is ill, please notify the staff of the nature of the illness, especially if the disease is contagious.

To protect all children from illness we will not accept children in the morning if they appear ill or have a temperature. If your child becomes ill you will be notified immediately so that he/she can be picked up within the hour. If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or more he/she should be kept home. If your child is free of fever or vomiting for 24 hours and is not contagious we will again accept the child in the program. We will administer medication one time a day, at 12:30 PM. Please plan on giving your child the morning and afternoon dose based on the 12:30 PM time for the afternoon dose. You must sign and date an authorization form, upon arrival in the morning. This form must be signed each day that medication is to be administered. For long term recurring medications you can sign a permanent medication authorization. Medications must be in the original container and must be taken home each day. You must label all medications clearly with the child's name and the current date. If your child receives the same medication for several days the date must be changed each day.

If your child has any of the following symptoms he or she should be kept home.

Diarrhea, Vomiting, Fever of 100 degrees, Extreme sore throat – possibility of streptococcal infection, Crusted eyelids or discharge from eyes – possibility of infectious pink eye, Small blisters on the body, face, or hands – possibility of chicken pox, Swollen glands at the back of neck, A red rash all over the body or a blotchy rash on the stomach and back – possibility of measles or scarlet fever, Swelling in front of the ear or over the jaw – possibility of mumps.

Tissues will be provided for children with runny noses. Children will be reminded to wash their hands after wiping their noses. In cases of mild coughs, without other symptoms, children will be given more fluids to help alleviate symptoms.

When contagious diseases are recognized at The Children's Academy, staff will post a notice to parents describing the type of illness and symptoms to look for. This information will give parents advance notice to plan alternate care arrangements for sick children. Names of sick children are not public information and will be kept confidential. Children with head or body lice will be isolated until the parent can pick the child up. The child may return the following day, after treatment has been administered.

The Children's Academy

Accidents / First Aid:

100% of our staff members are CPR and First Aid Certified. In an emergency situation appropriate action will be taken and parents will be notified.

If your child is injured at the center first aid will be administered. For minor bumps or scrapes an accident form will be filled out and signed by the teacher. This will include the nature of the injury and treatment. The form will be presented to you upon pick up for your signature. If further treatment is needed the parent, and/or doctor specified by the parent, will be contacted immediately. In an emergency situation your child will receive the necessary medical treatment until you can be contacted. Parents must sign the **Authorization for Emergency Treatment and Transportation** when enrolling their children.

Accident Insurance:

The Children's Academy accident insurance covers any accidents secondary to the parent's own health insurance. In the case of a claim the accident must be filed with the parent's health insurance first and then with the TCA Insurance Company.

Fire and Tornado Drills:

The Children's Academy performs fire drills (monthly) and tornado drills (quarterly) throughout the year. The exact dates are noted on monthly activity calendars.

Gang Free Zone:

Gang activity within 1000 feet of any childcare center or school is in violation of Texas State Law. Anyone engaging in such activities within this area is subject to harsher penalties.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

Arrivals and Departures:

Every child in attendance must be signed in every morning and out in the afternoon. Please be sure that anyone authorized to pick up your child is listed in your child's file. No child will be released to anyone not on the list. Persons authorized to pick up your child will be required to show two types of identification before a child is released. If someone is picking up your child, who is not on the pick-up list, you must fill out the change of pick up form located at the sign in area or call the center and speak with a director.

When you authorize another adult to pick up your child from The Children's Academy you must include their name, phone number, address, and give the person the last four digits of your social security number. The person picking up must see a director and have state issued identification.

Communication:

Monthly curriculum and menu calendars are distributed on the first of each month. Parental notices will be posted on the classroom door, placed in the child's cubby, posted on the bulletin board, personally distributed, mailed, or emailed. Sign-in sheets for authorization to give medication are located at the front desk. The authorization list to have your child picked up by someone other than yourself or those listed on the child's enrollment form is located at the front desk.

The Children's Academy

Volunteers:

The Children's Academy invites parents to volunteer their time to help oversee students during special events, parties, and programs. Sign-up forms are available at the front office. Those parents who wish to share special talents and cultural heritage with students are welcome.

Change of Address / Information:

It is the parent's responsibility to keep The Children's Academy notified of any address, phone number, or email address changes. Notify us immediately if you move, change any phone numbers, (including work and emergency numbers) or your email address.

What to Bring For Your Child:

Older children should wear clothing that is comfortable and that they can manage without help. Items such as jackets, backpacks, and sweaters should be marked with the child's name. Students dress should be modest, clean, neat, and weather appropriate. A child must wear appropriate clothing with no offensive slogans or writing. Shoes should be comfortable and suitable for any situation. Tennis shoes are the best. For safety reasons flip flops are not allowed.

Even older children may have spills or accidents and soil their clothes. Please furnish your child with an extra complete set of clothing. Please label each article of clothing with a permanent marker.

Birthday Parties:

Your child's birthday is a special day! Parents are welcome to bring cupcakes, cakes, or cookies to celebrate with the class. Please notify the teacher or director in advance before planning any celebration for your child. The Children's Academy will furnish guidelines for parties in your child's classroom. *Please do not send invitations for the children in your child's class to attend a party, unless all children are invited.*

If you need a great place to throw a birthday party, the center is available. If you have been enrolled for a year or more the rental is free! Please see the director for more information.

Smoking:

Smoking is not permitted in the building or on the grounds of The Children's Academy.

The Children's Academy

Community of Hope Campus (Mansfield)

The Children's Academy
1800 East Debbie Lane
Mansfield, TX 76063
P. 817-473-8585 F. 817-473-8563

South West Arlington Campus

The Children's Academy
4601 Hawkins Cemetery Road
Arlington, TX 76017
P. 817-478-4495 F. 817-478-0079

www.tcacademy.org
help@tcacademy.org

Member of the Texas Licensed Care Association
Member of the National Child Care Association

Items in blue are requirements of The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
(Minimum Standards)

The Children's Academy

AGREEMENT:

I have read and accept the policies stated above, as well as; the Parent Policies enrolment application. I agree to pay The Children's Academy any and all fees and tuitions that come due. In the event a third party offers to pay my families' tuition I understand I am still the sole person who is financially responsible. I am paying my registration fee and first week's tuition in advance. Both, the registration fee and first week's tuition, are non-refundable. The Children's Academy reserves the right to modify or change the above policies, procedures, and tuitions, as well as the Parent Policies Enrolment Application with two weeks written notice. Your child's attendance, on or after that date, will be considered your acceptance of the new policies, procedures and or tuitions.

Parent Signature

Date

THE STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF TARRANT

Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) before me this date the _____ day of _____,
20_____.

Notary Public

My commission expires the _____ day of _____, 20_____