



the
weekday
school AT UPUMC

**Parent
Handbook
2020-2021**

PARENT HANDBOOK

The Weekday School Mission Statement

The purpose of The Weekday School at University Park United Methodist Church is to build a strong, Christian foundation of love and learning in every child through nurturing and challenging them appropriately in all developmental areas.

The Weekday School (WDS) adheres to the philosophy that children are naturally curious about their environment and active participants in the learning process. The WDS offers a linear developmental program where children are given opportunities to gain age appropriate skill sets. Our learning environments provide a place where this natural curiosity can develop into a practical, on-going knowledge base for the child. The WDS also adheres to developmentally appropriate practices. It is our belief that within the context of developmentally appropriate practice, the child's educational growth is maximized.

Our educational philosophy also extends to the parents and families whom we serve. The WDS believes that parents are the child's first teacher. As such, our program works to establish open communication about the individual, developmental needs of the children we serve. We work together as parents and teachers to meet each child where he is and help her grow. Parents are invited to talk with teachers and administrators at any time.

The Weekday School Core Values

We believe in and are committed to:

- Sharing spiritual life lessons
- Offering developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Providing a caring, safe, nurturing environment designed for children
- Advocating for and supporting children and families of the school
- Fostering the sense of community developed throughout our history

The Weekday School Vision

We seek to create enthusiastic children who experience and exemplify God's love. These children will gain leadership skills and sharing spirits through a cultivated zest for learning, allowing them to become the most of who God created them to be.

Our Board and Administrative leadership is clear, strategic, relevant and sustainable, empowered by a strong relationship between our church and school, modeling Christ and glorifying God. We make sound decisions aligned with our mission and strategies to ensure we regularly achieve well-defined goals.

Our WDS program uses teaching methods that engage children creatively and experientially in hands-on exploration of developmentally appropriate concepts. Children are provided opportunities to learn through interaction with peers and teachers in a variety of settings. Our curriculum is developed and taught by experienced, dedicated teachers.

Hours of Operation

School hours are 9:00am - 12:00pm Monday, and 9:00am - 2:00pm Tuesday-Friday. The WDS office hours are 8:00am - 3:00pm, Monday-Friday.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

The WDS is accredited by NAEYC. Our Program ID is 725136. Parents may contact NAEYC by calling 1-800-424-2460. The NAEYC website is: www.naeyc.org

Texas Child Care Licensing Contact Information

The WDS is licensed by Texas Health and Human Services. Our license number is 167483. Parents may contact the local Child Care Licensing office located at: 8700 Stemmons, Suite 104, Dallas, Texas 75247, by calling (214) 583-4253. The Child Care Licensing website is: www.hhs.texas.gov

Texas Administrative Code

Texas Administrative Code

<u>TITLE 40</u>	SOCIAL SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE
<u>PART 19</u>	DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES
<u>CHAPTER 745</u>	LICENSING
<u>SUBCHAPTER K</u>	INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS
<u>DIVISION 1</u>	OVERVIEW OF INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS
<u>RULE §745.8415</u>	What can Licensing inspect and/or investigate?

We may investigate any part of your operation that could affect the health, safety, or well being of children. This includes, but is not limited to, access to all children in care, employees, records, and any area of the building, home or grounds where your operation is located.

Source Note: The provisions of this §745.8415 adopted to be effective March 1, 2002, 27 TexReg 965

Gang-Free Zone

House Bill 2086. This law adds §42.064 of the Human Resource Code and designates certain areas around child care centers as 'gang-free zones'. Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of the WDS is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

For detailed information about gang-free zones, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code. Additionally, parents may contact the City of University Park for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

Admission

The WDS does not discriminate against children on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender or ethnicity in its admission process or with regard to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities available to children at the school.

The admission process includes:

- Tour of the WDS
- Application for Admission form
- Non-refundable application fee

Non-enrolled siblings of currently enrolled students must complete the admission process outlined above.

Class Options

Ages and Birth Date Ranges	Available Class Days
Infants (9-14 months as of Sept 1)	T, W or F
Toddler I (15-22 months as of Sept 1)	M/W, T/Th, or F
Toddler II (23-30 months as of Sept 1)	M/W, T/Th, or F
2.5 Year Olds (2 on or before March 1)	M/W/F or T/Th
3 Year Olds (3 on or before Sept 1)	M/W/F, T/Th, or M-F
4 Year Olds (4 on or before Sept 1)	M/W/F or M-F
Kindergarten (5 on or before Sept 1)	M-F

Application

A complete Application for Admission form is required for each child interested in attending the WDS. The non-refundable application fee is \$50. The WDS is a ministry of University Park United Methodist Church (UPUMC). Therefore, the non-refundable application fee is waived for members of UPUMC.

Per age level, applications are sorted into the following categories:

- (1) Non-enrolled siblings of currently enrolled students of UPUMC members;
- (2) Non-enrolled siblings of currently enrolled students;
- (3) Non-enrolled students of UPUMC members; and
- (4) Non-enrolled students of new families.

Please note, there is no guarantee of WDS admission for non-enrolled siblings of currently enrolled students.

Tuition Overview

Tuition and fees will be based on the age of the child and the number of days enrolled. A current tuition payment schedule is available on the WDS website or in the WDS office. Tuition payments are collected per child, not per family. Tuition payments are non-transferable. A child's placement may be jeopardized if payment is not received by the specified deadline.

Please make all checks payable to The Weekday School or WDS.

Tuition and Refund Policy

Tuition Policy

Tuition and fees for the upcoming school year are due upon registration. Tuition and fees must be paid in advance of the school year in three installments (per the related schedule): upon registration; March 31, 2020; and July 18, 2020. A \$50 late fee will be assessed if payment is not received by the applicable payment date. An additional \$100 late fee will apply if payment is not received within five days of the applicable payment date. If payment is not received within ten days of the applicable payment date, your child will forfeit his/her placement. A \$30 charge will be assessed for all returned checks.

Refund Policy for Infants, Toddlers, 2.5s, 3s, 4s

If you are registering for Infants - 4s and should you decide not to have your child attend The Weekday School for the upcoming school year, a 70 percent refund of the first tuition installment will be given (i) if such request is made in writing on or before March 31, 2020 and (ii) if The Weekday School is able to meet capacity for that age group by the start of the upcoming school year; however, the registration fee will not be refunded. After March 31, 2020, the WDS is under no obligation to provide a tuition refund to a registrant, nor is a registrant entitled to receive a tuition refund from the WDS for any reason.

Refund Policy for Kindergarten

If you are registering for kindergarten and should you decide not to have your child attend The Weekday School for the upcoming school year, the WDS is under no obligation to provide a tuition refund to a registrant, nor is a registrant entitled to receive a tuition refund from the WDS for any reason.

Scholarship

Scholarship funds are available. Please contact our Business Administrator for the application to be considered. Tuition assistance does not impact admissions decisions. The deadline for requests is April 15.

Registration

Once accepted to the WDS you will receive the following:

- Registration form
- Enrollment form (including immunization record and signed statement of health by health care professional)

The Registration form and payment are due at the time of registration. Failure to turn in the forms listed above and provide payment may result in losing the registered spot.

Current Student Registration

Current student registration for the following year occurs in January. Registration dates and times are listed on the school calendar. Current student registration is completed online and is on a first come, first served basis. The WDS is a ministry of UPUMC. Therefore, members of UPUMC are allowed priority for registration in the WDS. To qualify as a church member, one or both parents of the current student must be a member of UPUMC for at least six consecutive months prior to the date of registration.

Current student registration will occur in the following order:

- (1) Currently enrolled students of UPUMC members
- (2) Currently enrolled students
- (3) Children of WDS employees not currently enrolled

Kindergarten Registration

Current student registration for kindergarten is completed in the WDS Office.

Current student registration for kindergarten will occur in the following order:

- (1) UPUMC members currently enrolled
- (2) Current students who have been enrolled since Infants/Toddler 1
- (3) Current students who have been enrolled since Toddler 2/2.5s
- (4) Current students who have been enrolled since 3s
- (5) Current students who have been enrolled since 4s

The Director has discretion to consider issues of registration priority on a case by case basis.

Enrollment

Before a child may attend the WDS, his/her Enrollment form must be on file in the office. The Enrollment form must be filled out, signed by your doctor, and returned to the WDS before school begins. Additionally, no child is permitted to attend school without a current health statement, updated immunization record, and completed Allergy Action Plan, if applicable. Currently enrolled children, with health statements already on file, must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Age Placement

Children will be placed in classes according to their age, based on the age requirement of public schools in the State of Texas. Currently, this is September 1 of the current school year. Exceptions to this rule will be decided through joint conferences with parents, the child's classroom teacher, Early Childhood Education Coordinator (ECE Coordinator), and the Director. Criteria for such a decision should include a developmental assessment at the parents' or guardians' expense, as well as classroom observation by the ECE Coordinator and the Director. Care should be taken to make a thoughtful decision based on objective data along with developmental information such as social, emotional, and physical maturity. We encourage children to proceed in the usual order of succession unless unusual circumstances indicate otherwise. The decision for placement will be made with consideration of current developmental progress and should be reevaluated during the school year.

Class Placement

Class placement is determined carefully and prayerfully by the class placement committee. This committee is comprised of the child's current teacher, other teachers within the current age level, ECE Coordinator, and the Director. The classroom placement process considers several key factors including the child's learning style, social opportunities, balancing boy/girl ratios, recommendations from teachers, and special needs of each child.

Specific parental requests for class placement for the upcoming school year must be made in writing. Parental requests must address educational needs and be submitted to the child's current classroom teacher by May 1. Please note, a parental request is considered but not guaranteed.

Welcome letters are mailed to children in mid-August. This letter is the initial contact made to the child by his/her classroom teacher.

Class Rosters

Children are assigned to specific teacher(s) for the entire school year. The WDS office makes class rosters available for view by Parent Orientation. The WDS office does not share class roster information outside of this timeframe.

Attendance

Drop-off

Timely arrival is important to the child and to the class. The school day begins at 9:00am. Screening stations open at 8:50am. At drop-off, all children must be escorted by an adult (18 years or older) to their designated screening station. After completing the screening process, the child will enter the WDS through a designated entry point closest to the screening station.

If a child arrives and the screening station is closed, the adult dropping off the child must contact the WDS office and await screening instructions.

Please note, WDS office staff will be assisting children and families with screening procedures each morning. To speak with a member of the WDS office staff, please contact the office after 9:30am.

Pick-up

The school day ends at 12:00pm on Monday and at 2:00pm Tuesday – Friday. The pick-up process begins at 11:50am on Monday and 1:50pm Tuesday – Friday.

At pick-up, children must be retrieved by an adult (18 years or older) at their designated exit point. The child's exit point is the same as his/her entry point.

Please note, WDS office staff will be assisting children and families with dismissal procedures at the end of each school day. To speak with a member of the WDS office staff, please contact the office after 12:15pm on Monday and 2:15pm Tuesday - Friday.

If your child must be picked-up early, please contact the WDS office. Early pick-up must be completed prior to 1:00pm.

Late pick-up

Children must be picked up by an adult (18 years or older) by the stated closing time. Late fees are charged at \$3 per minute. Late fees begin to be charged at 2:15pm. Please note, late fees are assigned to a child on the occurrence of the child's second late pick-up. WDS office staff sweep the building for children beginning five minutes after stated closing time. Please contact the WDS office if you are late to pick-up.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent, please call the office, (214) 361-4626, before the beginning of class.

Siblings

Siblings may not be left unattended. For their safety, please supervise and manage siblings during drop-off and pick-up procedures.

Release of Children

Outside of a child's parent or guardian, a child may be released to adults (18 years or older) designated by the parent/guardian's written consent. Additional documentation is required by the WDS when a child will be regularly picked up by an adult (18 years of age or older) who is not the child's parent or guardian. These individuals must be documented on the child's Enrollment form. A driver license will be checked for anyone picking up children other than a parent.

Building Security

The WDS takes the security of children seriously. All exterior doors of the WDS remain locked to the outside throughout the school day. Interior security doors are locked throughout the school day.

For the security of your children, WDS employees do not admit persons through locked doors.

Facilities

The indoor and outdoor facilities of the WDS are the property of UPUMC. Each morning a WDS employee walks throughout the facility and outdoor areas to ensure that they are free from trash, glass, sharp or hazardous items, harmful animals, insects, and other pests.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are closed to the public during WDS business hours.

Please contact UPUMC for information regarding playground(s) reservation and use.

Parking at the WDS

Please be mindful of children when in the parking lot. This is especially important during the high traffic times of drop-off and pick-up. Drivers should reduce their speed significantly and watch closely for children and families. Children should be held by the hand and/or use a stroller when crossing the parking lot. As a reminder, UP Police patrol both our parking lot and parking spaces along Caruth Boulevard. The WDS has been made aware that parking violations will be ticketed. Please do not park your vehicle in fire lines or directly in front of the Atrium doors.

Do not leave children or personal belongings unattended in vehicles. The WDS discourages idling vehicles in our parking areas.

Inclement Weather

Our inclement weather policy is as follows:

Should HPISD experience a delayed start or closure, the WDS will be closed.

In the event of a school closing, families will be notified via email and text message. Decisions to close the WDS are closely aligned with the decisions made by HPISD to close or delay the opening of schools.

No refunds will be given if the WDS is closed due to unavoidable circumstances such as inclement weather or facility interruption (e.g., gas leak, electrical outage, etc.). Days missed due to closings will not be made up at a later date.

Education

Curriculum

The WDS uses a thematic approach as the basis of its curriculum. The thematic approach is a method of organizing learning materials and activities. The approach supports two key teaching components: (1) information and (2) skill opportunity. Information is comprised of the details about the theme that the teacher shares with the children. A skill opportunity is any activity provided to the children that helps them reach specific developmental goals.

Learning Centers

Learning centers are present in each classroom to provide children with a rich variety of experiences, projects, materials, problems, and ideas to explore and investigate. Learning centers include: dramatic play, blocks, science/discovery, writing, library, art music/listening, sensory/water table, age-appropriate access to technology/computers, and math/manipulatives.

Child Assessment Plan

Assessment is the process of tracking the developmental progress of your child. The WDS uses a variety of instruments and methods to gain insight into your child's social/emotional, cognitive, language and physical development. Our assessment process also addresses areas of self-help and classroom functioning. Assessment information is represented in the child's portfolio and reflects each child's progress over the course of the school year. The child's portfolio includes work samples, anecdotal observations, and age-appropriate developmental information.

The assessment instruments used at our school are both formal and informal in nature. Formal assessment tools are norm-referenced or standardized. The formal assessment tool used by the WDS is the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI). Kindergarten classrooms are the only age level that participates in a formal assessment. The TPRI assesses various reading readiness skills and spotlights the strengths and weaknesses in the student's learning experience. The TPRI is administered by the WDS Librarian. She enjoys a strong familiarity with these children as she works with them each week at their appointed library time.

Informal assessment tools are staff generated and paced for use in the classroom. Developmental checklists (Infant/Toddler 1 & 2/2.5s programs), progress reports (3s/4s programs) and the Kindergarten Student Report are the informal assessment tools used in our classrooms. These tools are aligned to our curriculum, which is based on the thematic approach, and completed two times each school year (fall and spring). Teachers are trained each school year on the methodology and application of our informal assessment tools. Assessment trainings provided to the teachers encourages them to use our tools in an organic manner within their classroom. Teachers are specifically trained in the use of small groups, observation, and lesson planning to target individualized skills. At the conclusion of each school year, age-level assessment committees meet to review informal and formal assessment tools to ensure that the tools remain relevant to our program's needs.

The program utilizes data collected through the assessment process in two ways. First, the teachers incorporate it into the development of their lesson plan. Second, the program uses the assessment information to evaluate curriculum and education activities currently in use.

Parents/guardians participate in the assessment process by giving and receiving pertinent developmental information. They provide developmental, especially social/emotional and behavioral, information in the form of the Parental Survey. Throughout the school year, parents/guardians are invited to add notes about interactions and activities they observe during day-to-day interactions with their child.

Parents/guardians may request information, either verbally or in writing, about their child's growth and development at any time. A written report, detailing the child's progress is provided to the child's family in the fall and spring semesters.

Statement of Confidentiality

Your child's confidentiality is maintained throughout the assessment process. Only the child's classroom teacher(s), ECE Coordinator, Director, and the child's parent/guardian have access to the child's assessment information. The classroom teacher(s), ECE Coordinator, and Director have access to the child's assessment information for educational support purposes only. All assessment data are collected and maintained in the child's portfolio folder, which remains in the classroom. If there is a need for outside specialists to review the assessment data, written parental permission is required.

Educational/Developmental Differences

The WDS makes every effort to meet the needs of each child, including those with special needs. Parents are responsible for providing evaluations and testing of children with special needs. If at all possible, teachers will seek to create the best situation for inclusion. These modifications must work within the resources and capabilities of the WDS.

When the WDS teachers and staff suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner and is provided with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment.

Outside Therapeutic Services

There will not be any in-classroom or school visitors until further notice. This includes outside therapeutic services.

Parent Resources

The WDS office maintains a list of therapeutic service providers available for any families seeking outside assistance for their child or family. This list is made up of agencies and professionals that are local and have previously served WDS families and/or WDS employees. Please contact the WDS office for information about this list.

Discipline and Guidance

Discipline must be:

- (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
- (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance

Failure to discipline children in accordance with the discipline and guidance guidelines listed above may result in disciplinary action including reprimand and/or immediate termination of employment.

Allegations of improper discipline and guidance will be investigated in accordance with the Discipline and Guidance Investigation Policy (see Employee Discipline Investigation Policy, page).

Challenging Behavior Protocol

The WDS adopts the following definition of challenging behavior: "Challenging behavior is any behavior that (1) interferes with children's learning, development and success at play, (2) is harmful to the child, other children or adults, [or] (3) puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure."

(Kaiser & Rasminsky, *Challenging Behavior in Young Children* (2nd Ed.), Pearson Education Inc., 2007, p.8).

For children demonstrating challenging behaviors, the teachers/staff implement the following:

- (1) Identify events, activities, interactions, and/or other environmental factors that predict the challenging behavior.
- (2) Track these behaviors through observations and anecdotal records.
- (3) By using the above techniques, the teacher(s) formulate a functional behavior assessment (FBA).
- (4) With this information, teachers/staff and parents work as a team to implement a behavior intervention plan (BIP).
- (5) As the BIP is implemented, the ECE Coordinator and Director will act as a resource to teachers and parents.
- (6) If needed, parents may be asked to provide outside resources to assist with a child's challenging behavior. The WDS office maintains a resource list for parents of the school.

Biting

Biting is a common behavior often seen in young children. Biting behaviors typically resolve as children mature and develop better communication, self-regulation and problem-solving skills.

While biting is a typical behavior for young children, it does not mean that it is acceptable. At the WDS, our teachers and staff implement the following procedures for incidents involving biting.

- The child who is bitten receives appropriate levels of first aid.
- Parents of the child who was bitten will be notified by the teacher(s) and will receive a Biting Incident Report. Please note, the name of the child presenting with the biting behavior will remain confidential.
- Parents of the child who bit will be notified by the teacher(s) and the incident will be documented.

If biting behaviors persist, the Challenging Behavior Protocol will be followed. Teachers, staff and parents will implement a behavior intervention plan that is individualized for the child presenting with biting behaviors.

Exclusionary Measures

Exclusionary Measures

The WDS strives to limit the use of exclusionary measures such as suspension or dismissal. However, if the WDS cannot adequately meet the needs of the child, or if stated policies and procedures are abused, the child may be suspended or dismissed from the WDS. Please note, exclusionary measures are not considered until all other possible interventions/adaptations have been utilized and there is a general consensus that exclusion (suspension or dismissal) is in the best interest of the child. If exclusionary measures must be taken, applicable federal and state civil rights laws are followed. Additionally, information about access to services and alternative placement will be offered to families.

Developmental Needs

WDS teachers and staff will work to address a child's developmental needs via the Challenging Behavior Protocol. Additionally, adaptations to a child's learning environment and school day schedule will also be created with input by teachers, staff and parents. These adaptations will be implemented and monitored within a given timeline. Both a functional behavior assessment (FBA) and a behavior intervention plan (BIP) will be created and implemented. If all possible interventions/adaptations have been utilized and there is no growth toward of positive outcomes, exclusionary measures will be considered.

Abuse of Policies and Procedures

WDS teachers and staff will work to address confusion or misunderstanding of stated WDS policies and procedures with families. Communication and conversation will be documented. Detailed explanations and timelines will be utilized to help families understand and meet WDS policies and procedures. If all possible interventions/adaptations to help the family meet policies and procedures have been utilized and there is no growth toward positive outcomes, exclusionary measures will be considered.

Toilet Training

The WDS views toilet training as a developmental process. There is no magic time, nor method, for reaching this goal. If your child is in the process of toilet training, please inform your child's teacher. The WDS toilet training guidelines are listed below.

- (1) All children, regardless to their mastery, should be sent to school in loose fitting clothing that is easily handled by the child. Please, no belts.
- (2) Accidents happen, please provide extra clothing for your child.
- (3) After toileting children should expect to wipe their own bottoms. The teachers are not able to do this for them.
- (4) Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces is immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home with the child for laundering.
- (5) The WDS does not utilize potty chairs.
- (6) In classrooms without changing facilities, children who are unable to use the toilet consistently must be sent to school in pull-ups. Changing of pull-ups will be handled in the class bathroom. If needed, a member of the WDS office staff will be called to assist.
- (7) In classrooms without changing facilities, children who experience a toileting accident will be changed into new clothing. Changing of soiled clothing will be handled in the class bathroom. If needed, a member of the WDS office staff will be called to assist.

Animals on the Premises

No animals are to be on the premises without prior arrangement with the classroom teacher and the Director. Licensing requires parents to be notified in writing when animals will be present in the school. Any animal permitted on the school property must first check in with the WDS office. Documentation of the animal's most recent vaccine record, as well as a statement of health from a veterinarian, must be on file in the office. Dogs are not permitted on the playgrounds.

Weather and Outside Time

The WDS assesses many factors to determine whether or not an outdoor play experience is healthy for our children. The Child Care Weather Watch chart combines both temperature and humidity to determine the heat index/wind chill factor, and is a primary resource. Additionally, the WDS monitors the air quality index using The Air Quality and Outdoor Activity Guidance for Schools chart. WDS teachers also closely monitor the children while outside for signs of over-heating and/or breathing issues. Teachers use their professional discretion in determining how long they remain outdoors. Tap water from the classroom is provided throughout the day, so that the children are well hydrated.

As part of our daily activities, state standards require us to go outside daily. For children who are in good health and properly dressed, going outside provides an alternative learning environment for stimulating thoughts, ideas, and social interaction. If your child is unable to participate in the classes' daily activities that includes outside time, please have your child stay at home. The WDS does not have adequate staff for supervising children who are unable to play outside.

We ask that you send your child with appropriate outerwear, including close-toed shoes. In the event of inclement weather, excessively hot weather, or poor air quality, the teachers, under the Director's guidance, will use their discretion on the amount of time outside and may choose to keep the children inside. It is helpful to send your child to school with sunscreen already applied. If you wish for your child to wear mosquito repellent, please apply at home.

Nap Time & Rest Periods

For infants and toddlers, nap time is scheduled daily between 12:30pm - 2:00pm. Although children are not required to sleep, everyone is required to sit on a mat and rest quietly. The WDS provides cribs/mats and sheets for each infant/toddler. If you would prefer for your child to nap at home, please pick up your child prior to the classroom's scheduled nap time. If a child is continually having problems during the rest time, a parent or guardian may be contacted. Please note, per licensing guidelines, children do not have bottles and/or training cups while in a crib or on a nap mat.

For children participating in the 2.5s, 3s, 4s and Kindergarten programs, a quiet rest time is scheduled daily. Children are given the opportunity to select a book and quietly rest for a brief period of time.

Nap Time Comfort Items

For children enrolled in the Infant, Toddler 1 and Toddler 2 classes, families are welcome to provide a blanket and one special "lovey" item from home for nap time. The WDS does not provide these items. These items will be stored individually in the classroom. Please launder these items upon return to home.

For infants younger than 12 months, blankets, comforters, quilts, pillows, soft toys, stuffed animals, or bumper pads are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment. Infants may use a pacifier during sleep; however the pacifier must not be attached to stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord or other attaching mechanism.

Please do not send a nap mat from home.

Safe Sleep Practices for Infants

Infants 12 months and younger are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, unless otherwise ordered by a physician. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position. Only one infant is placed in a crib for sleep. Cribs are bare except for a tight fitting sheet and mattress protector. Blankets, comforters, quilts, pillows, soft toys, stuffed animals, or bumper pads are not permitted for use in the crib for infants younger than 12 months. Please note, infant sleep positioners (devices intended to keep an infant in a desired position while sleeping) are not permitted for use. Infants' heads, faces and cribs remain uncovered during sleep. Infants are not swaddled for sleep or rest. If an infant needs extra warmth, sleep clothing may be used. Please note, only sleeveless sleep sacks are permitted for use in the classroom. Infants may use a pacifier during sleep, however the pacifier must not be attached to stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord or other attaching mechanism.

If an infant arrives to the program asleep or falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (e.g., bouncy chair, swing, stroller, high chair) the infant will be moved to a crib at the teaching staff's earliest opportunity.

The WDS ensures that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. WDS teachers and staff actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound. Awake infants participate in supervised "tummy time" several times throughout the day.

The WDS is smoke-free. The use of e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers are prohibited.

Transportation/Field Trips

There will be no field trips until further notice. If and when the WDS will allow field trips, the WDS will issue an addendum to this Handbook.

Classroom Parties

Classroom parties are arranged by each individual class and organized by the room parent and classroom teacher. Parents can sign up for party needs at the beginning of the year. All parties take place on the WDS campus. Until further notice, parents/legal guardians are unable to attend classroom parties in-person.

Bounce houses, petting zoos, food trucks and water slides are prohibited.

Birthday Celebrations

Classrooms celebrate each child's birthday. Please speak to your child's teacher prior to sending any birthday snacks. Any food for any celebrations, including birthdays, must be individually wrapped for each child and take into consideration any food allergies that may be present in the classroom. Birthday party invitations may not be distributed at school.

Balloons

Balloons are a choking hazard for children under the age of five. Balloons are not permitted in the Infant, Toddler 1, Toddler 2, 2.5s, 3s & 4s programs.

Balloons are permitted in the Kindergarten program with prior teacher approval.

Food Allergy Recommendations and Guidelines

The WDS protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food to the best of its ability. However, the WDS is not, nor cannot be, free of food items and non-food items that may lead to any allergic reaction. The program asks families of a child with food allergies to give consent for posting information about that child's food allergy and, if consent is given, then posts that information in the classroom so it is a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the program day. Parents of a child with severe food allergies are encouraged to contact the parents in their child's class to share specific details of their child's allergy.

The WDS will provide snacks that are "safe" for classes that have children with known food allergies. However, if a child has a diagnosed food allergy or medical issue, parents may elect to send an alternative snack to school.

Children with a diagnosed food allergy that requires medication must have an Allergy Action Plan on file in the WDS office prior to attending school. For more information on policies and procedures related to these items, please see Medications on page 26.

Meal Service Practices

The WDS will not provide lunches or snacks. All lunches and snacks must be brought from home.

No refrigeration is provided, nor can food be heated. A supply of drinking water from the tap/faucet in the classroom is always available to each child and is served at every snack and after active play. Please send your child to school with a water bottle or sippy cup.

Food Safety Policy

The WDS does not allow children younger than four years these foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas; hard pretzels; spoonful(s) of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. This is a NAEYC requirement and is applicable to food brought from home. The WDS will not wash fresh fruits and vegetables brought from home. Liquids and foods hotter than 100 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach at all times.

For children with special feeding needs, the WDS will document the type and quantity of food the child consumes and provide this information to the family at the end of the school day.

Infants

The type and quantity of food the child consumes while at the WDS will be documented via the Infant Daily Sheet. This sheet is sent home with the child at the end of each school day.

Per NAEYC guidelines, formula should be sent in factory sealed containers. Parents may bring solid food prepared at home for use by their child. Children are offered fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup. Bottle feedings do not contain solid food unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions with a medical reason. If staff warm formula or human milk, the milk is warmed in hot water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than 5 minutes. WDS staff will discard any unfinished and unrefrigerated formula or breast milk after one hour.

For an infant who is not yet ready for table food, written feeding instructions that are signed and dated by the parent/guardian must be provided to the infant teachers. This information should be reviewed and updated every 30 days until the infant is able to eat table food.

Nursing/Breastfeeding Policy

The WDS supports breastfeeding by complying with the following procedures:

- (1) The WDS accepts, stores, and serves expressed breast milk for feedings.
- (2) The WDS only accepts breast milk in ready-to-feed sanitary containers.
- (3) Breast milk should be labeled with the infant's full name and date that the milk was expressed. It is stored in a refrigerator for no longer than 24 hours.
- (4) The WDS will gently mix, not shake, the breast milk before feeding to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in breast milk.
- (5) The WDS will discard any unfinished and unrefrigerated breast milk after one hour.
- (6) The WDS staff will work to coordinate feedings with nursing mothers.

Hand washing

Hand washing is an important method in reducing the spread of disease. WDS teachers and staff follow the NAEYC guidelines for hand washing. Additionally, children participate in hand washing procedures each day. Children are to wash their hands upon arrival to the classroom. Children also wash their hands after diapering or use of the toilet; after blowing their nose; before and after outdoor time; and before lunch and snack.

The WDS utilizes alcohol-based hand sanitizers on occasion. Employees provide direct supervision of children while applying hand sanitizers. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers does not replace regular hand washing.

Health and Safety Information for Children

Any health information disclosed to the WDS teachers and staff must remain confidential. This includes information regarding a child's allergies (per page 26), medications and/or medical diagnosis. Health information and immunization records are maintained in the WDS office. These files are only accessed by the WDS staff.

Parents are requested to update their child's health information (allergies, medications, immunizations, etc.) as regularly as possible. By enrolling their child into the WDS, parents/legal guardians give the WDS staff and his/her child's teacher reasonable access to the child's health information.

Immunizations

Each child enrolled in the WDS must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Services. This requirement applies to all children in care from birth to 14 years of age. All required immunizations for your child's age must be completed by the date of admission. Exemptions for immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services rules 25 TAC §97.62 (relating to Exclusions from Compliance). *The recommended childhood and adolescent Immunization Schedule is found at www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize.*

Immunization schedules are monitored by the WDS. Parents will be reminded to update immunization records throughout the year. Key dates relating to the immunization timeline are found below.

January- overdue immunization records identified and parents contacted via email.

May 1- current immunization record due to the WDS. This record is for the following school year and accompanies the Enrollment form.

August- overdue immunization records identified and parents contacted via email.

Please note, children may not attend school until a current immunization record is on file in the WDS office.

If your child has a delayed immunization schedule or an exemption from immunization requirements on file with the school, he/she will be promptly excluded from school activities if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs at the WDS.

Employees of the WDS work to protect children from vaccine-preventable diseases. Teachers in the Infant and Toddler 1 program must submit current documentation of the Tdap vaccine. The Tdap vaccine prevents the spread of Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

The requirements for Vision and Hearing Screening apply each year. Children enrolled in the 4s and kindergarten programs at the WDS must be screened within 120 days of the first day of school. Please see the Enrollment form for details.

Illness at School

In addition to the COVID-19 Family Policy, the WDS will follow the policy below for other illnesses.

If a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be removed from the classroom and relocated to the isolation room. When you are contacted and told your child is ill, you are required to make arrangements to pick him/her up immediately. If parents/legal guardians are unavailable, the WDS will contact persons listed on the bottom of the child's Enrollment form.

Children who present with the symptoms listed below will be sent home:

- FEVER - oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- DIARRHEA
- VOMITING
- RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS - difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing, child makes high pitched croupy or whooping sound after they cough, child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough
- SORE THROAT - fever and/or swollen glands in the neck are present, painful to swallow
- APPEARANCE, BEHAVIOR, UNUSUAL COLOR - child looks or acts differently: unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken, unable to participate in classroom routines and activities
- RASH - skin rashes affecting the face, hands, abdomen, arms, back, feet or legs
- SORES - sores affecting the face, hands, abdomen, arms, back, feet with or without drainage
- SEVERE BODY ACHES - headache, earache, or stomachache

When to Keep Your Child at Home

In addition to the COVID-19 Family Policy, the WDS asks families to follow the policy below for other illnesses.

The WDS is concerned about the well-being of all children in our care. It is important that everyone take precautions to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses.

Certain symptoms in children may suggest a communicable disease. **Children who have had the following symptom(s) and/or diagnose(s) within 24 hours should be kept home.**

Please see below for information regarding when children may return to WDS attendance:

- FEVER - oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher. *Child may attend when no fever present for 24 hours without fever suppressing medication*
- DIARRHEA - *Child may attend when diarrhea has ceased for 24 hours*
- VOMITING - *Child may attend when vomiting has ceased for 24 hours*
- RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS - difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing, child makes high pitched croupy or whooping sound after they cough, child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough. *Child may attend with note from doctor*
- SORE THROAT - painful to swallow or talk, swollen glands in neck. *Child may attend with note from doctor*
- APPEARANCE, BEHAVIOR, UNUSUAL COLOR - child looks or acts differently: unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken, unable to participate in regular routines and activities. *Child may attend 24 hours after normative appearance, behavior and color have returned*
- RASH - skin rashes affecting the face, hands, abdomen, arms, back, feet or legs. *Child may attend with note from doctor*
- SORES - sores with drainage which cannot be covered by clothing or bandages. *Child may attend with note from doctor*
- STREP THROAT - *Child may attend when the following are met: (1) 24 hours after treatment has begun, (2) no fever present for 24 hours without fever suppressing medication, (3) note from doctor*
- PINKEYE - *Child may attend when the following are met: (1) 24 hours after treatment has begun, (2) note from doctor*
- CHICKEN POX - *Child may attend when the following are met: (1) each sore must be crusted over, (2) no fever present for 24 hours without fever suppressing medication, (3) note from doctor*
- RINGWORM, SCABIES - *Child may attend when the following are met: (1) treatment has begun, (2) note from doctor*
- LICE - *Child may attend after treatment whereby all nits have been removed. Child must receive head check by WDS office staff to determine permission to return to class*

Runny Nose: The WDS is aware that seasonal allergies can occur in young children. However, when the care of this symptom interrupts the daily routine and activities of the classroom, it becomes a hindrance to instruction. If your child presents with an excessively runny nose, which interrupts daily classroom routine and instruction, you will be asked to pick him/her up from school.

Please do not send your child to school if your child cannot play outside or participate in school day routines and activities.

Please notify the school office within 24 hours if your child has a communicable or childhood disease, including but not limited to: COVID-19, influenza, measles, chicken pox, mumps, scarlet fever, head lice, scabies, impetigo, pinkeye, or ringworm. Parents and/or guardians will be notified via email from the WDS office if their child has been exposed to an infectious or communicable disease. Confidentiality is important to us. The infected child's name will not be shared in any communications with the classroom. The WDS reserves the right to determine when a child who has been ill can return to school.

Medications

The WDS consults with local health professionals to review our policies and procedures regarding distribution of medications.

Medicine administered to children at the WDS requires the following:

- All medication must be checked into the WDS office
- Parents/guardians must give written permission for staff to administer prescription or over the counter medication (Authorization for Dispensing Medication form)
- Medication must be labeled with the child's first and last names
- Medication must include the following information: (1) the date that either the prescription was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child's health care provider to begin the medication, (2) the name of the licensed health care provider, (3) the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, (4) the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication; and (5) instructions on how to administer and store it
- Medication is kept in the WDS office in a locked cabinet or, in cases of severe diagnosed allergies, inside the WDS Emergency Bag

Please note, teachers cannot accept medication.

Allergy Action Plans

Children diagnosed with an allergy that requires medication must have a current Allergy Action Plan on file in the WDS office before attending school. The Allergy Action Plan must be signed by the child's parent/guardian and the child's doctor.

Non-prescription preventatives

Over the counter diaper cream, lotion and lip balm are not considered medication. However, use in the classroom requires written parental/guardian consent. This written consent should be given to the classroom teacher.

Sunscreen, sun block, and insect repellent are not administered by our teachers and staff. Please administer these items, if needed, prior to sending your child to school.

First-aid

WDS employees maintain current pediatric first-aid certifications. WDS employees will provide reasonable first-aid to cuts, scratches, bruises, etc. with appropriate first-aid materials. First-aid kits are available throughout the WDS.

Accidents and Injuries

Safety of the children in our care is of utmost importance at all times. Children requiring first-aid will be brought to the WDS office, unless it is best for the child to remain at the site of the accident. Any accident concerning a child must be reported to the Director. Parents/guardians will be notified of the accident. An Incident/Illness Report form will be completed by the witness to the incident and signed by the Director.

If an accident results in an injury that requires your child to receive treatment by a health care professional, please report it to the office. The WDS is required to contact licensing in this situation. Licensing will conduct an investigation of the accident to ensure that correct protocols and procedures were followed by the WDS. Please see page 2, Texas Administrative Code Rule §745.8415, for details of licensing's investigation process.

Emergency Care for your Child

If your child should become seriously injured you will be notified immediately. By signing the Enrollment form, you have granted permission for WDS employees to take whatever steps may be necessary to obtain emergency medical and dental care if warranted.

If the WDS cannot contact a parent/guardian, employees will do any or all of the following. Expenses incurred will be borne by the child's family:

- Call 911
- Give the child first-aid or CPR, if needed
- Accompany the child to an emergency room, if needed)

If the emergency is such that a child's life is determined to be in danger, 911 will be contacted first before attempting to contact a parent/guardian.

Emergency Preparedness Plans

Should an emergency arise, the WDS will implement the WDS Emergency Preparedness Plans. Details of these plans are located in the WDS Emergency Bag found in each classroom.

Evacuation

Children, teachers and staff leave the WDS and evacuate to a designated safe area away from the school.

Preschool & kindergarten wings: Exit the WDS toward Caruth Blvd. and evacuate to Smith Park. During monthly fire drills, these wings practice by evacuating the building and sitting along the sidewalk of Caruth Blvd.

Infant/Toddler wing: Exit the WDS toward Colgate Ave. and evacuate to the Colgate sidewalk (closest to Colgate Ave./ Pickwick Ln.). During monthly fire drills, this wing practices by evacuating the WDS and sitting along the sidewalk of Colgate Ave.

Relocation

Children, teachers and staff leave the WDS and relocate to a designated, alternate shelter. This designated shelter is: Christ the King Catholic Church 8017 Preston Road Dallas, TX 75225.

Sheltering/Lockdown

Children, teachers, and staff remain in the WDS.

Sheltering- children, teachers and staff relocate to the UPUMC gym located in the basement.

Lockdown- children, teachers and staff quietly relocate to a space with a door that locks.

Communications

WDS employees should have their personal cell phones with them during any evacuation, relocation, or sheltering/lock-down event. As soon as the children, teachers and staff have been safely evacuated or relocated, families will be contacted by WDS staff.

Additionally, WDS administrative staff will contact the appropriate local authority (fire, police, EMS and/or health department) and Texas Health and Human Services.

In the event of severe weather, families will be notified that the WDS is sheltering in the gym.

Essential Documentation

The Sign-In Book and WDS Emergency Bag must remain with the children during any evacuation, relocation or sheltering event.

Release of Children

In the case of an evacuation/relocation event where children, teachers and staff are unable to return to the WDS, children will be reunited with parents at a designated safe area.

This designated safe area (Smith Park, Christ the King Catholic Church etc.) will be communicated to families via text/email. In the case of a shelter-in-place/lockdown event, children will be reunited with families at the WDS.

Personal Belongings and Dress

Each child should have a complete change of clothing to keep in the cubby or locker in case of accidents. Items should include shirt, pants, socks, underwear and disposable diapers when needed. Each season presents its own challenge for parents and teachers regarding clothing. We encourage you to label all clothing as well as lunch boxes, school bags, diaper bags, and especially those items which can easily be misplaced or forgotten. Children should be dressed to play when coming to school. Dress your child in clothing that is durable and comfortable. Since we go outside whenever possible, dress children accordingly. Select closed toed shoes that give support and allow freedom of movement. Children will participate in "messy" activities, such as painting. Although we do take precautions to prevent clothes from getting damaged, accidents do happen. We recommend clothing that will not present a problem to you or your child. The WDS is not responsible for stained or ruined clothing.

Our classrooms and playgrounds are equipped with adequate, age-appropriate toys. Please do not allow your child to bring personal toys or possessions to school. We cannot accept responsibility for lost or broken personal items.

Diapers

Only disposable diapers are permitted at the WDS. Please do not send your child in cloth diapers. Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces is immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

The WDS does not provide: disposable diapers or diaper cream. If your child needs these items, please bring them from home labeled with your child's name. Use of over the counter diaper cream in the classroom requires written parental/guardian consent. This written consent should be given to the classroom teacher.

WDS School Bags

Children enrolled in the 2.5s, 3s, and 4s classes will receive a bag from the school. This bag should be kept year to year. The cost to replace a WDS school bag is \$10.

Children enrolled in Kindergarten may bring their own backpack. Children enrolled in the Infant, Toddler 1 and Toddler 2 classes may bring their own backpack and/or diaper bag.

Records of Children

Per licensing requirements, children's records are accessible to the parents/guardians throughout the WDS's hours of operation. Parents/guardians always have the right to access any of their child's records.

Records Request Policy

Records Requested for a Non-Legal Matter

Any request for records (e.g., a child's academic portfolio, account statement, etc.), must be made by the parent or legal guardian of a child in writing (e.g., email) to the Director of the WDS. The request must specify the following information:

- Name of Child
- Name of Requestor
- Relationship of Requestor to Child
- Records Requested
- How Records should be Delivered (e.g., Email, FedEx, Pick-up, etc.)
- Purpose for the Record Request

The Director will respond promptly to any such requests, typically within 3 business days. Should a Court Order or any other legal document exist that would prevent the dissemination of a child's records to that child's parent(s), such order must be provided to the WDS.

Records Requested for a Legal Matter - Pre- or Threatened Litigation

The WDS strives to balance its need to comply with Texas Child Care Licensing Requirements, which allow all parents reasonable access to their child's school records, and the desire to remain neutral in any legal matter (regardless of the stage of such matter) concerning WDS families. As such, any records requested pursuant to a potential (whether pre-litigation or threatened litigation) legal matter must conform to the requesting procedures set forth above and the requesting party must also disclose such records are being requested for legal reasons. Upon receiving such a request, the Director will copy the requested material and return them to the requesting parent within 3 business days. Additionally, the Director will provide a copy of the request and the requested materials to the non-requesting parent and any known legal representatives of the requesting parent and non-requesting parent.

Records Requested for a Legal Matter - Pending Litigation

Any documents requested for a use in a pending litigation matter (including pending divorce or child custody proceedings) must be made pursuant to a subpoena to the WDS. The WDS will then comply with the terms of the subpoena.

Parent Notifications

Please make sure the school has your correct contact information, including email address. All families will be notified in writing of any changes made to WDS operational policies and admissions agreement. The WDS's licensing inspection report and other required postings are located in the WDS office. Families may request to see copies of these items at any time.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Communication is an important part of the relationship between your family and the WDS. Parents are welcome to request a parent/teacher conference with their child's teacher independent of the scheduled conferences.

If you need to speak with your child's teacher at any time, please arrange for a mutually convenient time to talk.

Parent Portal/Class Blogs

Each class of children maintains a classroom blog. Families may access these blogs via the Parent Portal on the WDS website. An email will be sent to the primary email address provided by the family each time the classroom blog is updated. Please note, classroom blogs are password protected. The WDS will provide password information to families each school year.

Parent Participation

Classroom Guest

There will not be any in-person classroom guests until further notice. If visitors will be allowed, the WDS will issue an addendum to this Handbook.

Parents' Association

Every parent is a member of the WDS Parents' Association and is invited and encouraged to attend Parents' Association monthly Board meetings. The purpose of the Parents' Association is to give parents an opportunity to be actively involved in events and mission opportunities at the school and to develop a sense of community among educators, children, and their parents. The list of the Parents' Association's Board members and Committee Chairs is located in the school directory. For more information regarding the Parents' Association, please contact our Parents' Association President whose contact information is located in the WDS Directory.

Families in Need

If you know of a situation in which a family is in need please contact the WDS office. You may also contact the Parents' Association Sunshine Committee Chair listed in your school directory.

Open Communication Policy

Communication through listening and talking is extremely important. We are taking this journey together and want to collaborate with you. The open communication policy at the WDS encourages families to share questions or concerns about our program with your child's classroom teacher and/or a member of the WDS administrative team. If you have a question about our program, please contact your child's teacher or the WDS office. We are here to help and are happy to answer your questions.

The WDS believes that concerns are best addressed through open communication. When warranted, the WDS will attempt to keep all such expressions of concern, their investigation, and the terms of their resolution confidential. However, in the course of investigating and resolving concerns, some dissemination of information to others may be necessary and appropriate. Families are encouraged to share concerns to resolve the issue effectively. If after having those conversations, you believe that there has been no resolution, then you may talk with the Director in order to work towards a resolution. If you are experiencing difficulty with the Director, or if you believe that there has been no resolution, you may talk with the Chair of the WDS Board of Directors.

Preventing and Responding to Abuse and Neglect of Children

Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas. If you suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, you are required by law to report it to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or a law enforcement agency. You are required to make a report within 48 hours of the time you suspected the child has been or may be abused or neglected. Your report is confidential and your identity is kept confidential.

Employees of the WDS are mandated by law to report any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect. If circumstances warrant suspicions or questions, an employee is to notify the Director immediately.

Definitions

Abuse is the mental, emotional, physical, or sexual injury to a child or failure to prevent such injury to a child.

Neglect includes (1) failure to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter and/or medical care; and/or (2) leaving a child in a situation where the child is at risk of harm.

Contact Information

To report abuse, neglect, or exploitation please call the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, toll-free hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or file an on-line report at the TDFPS website, <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.

Making the Report

Be specific. Provide the name, age and gender of the child; brief description of the child; current injuries medical issues or behavioral problems; parents' names and names of siblings living in the home. Tell exactly what happened and when. Be sure to record all injuries and incidents you have observed, including the dates and time of day. Provide any information you have about the relationship between the child and the suspected abuser.

Abuse assistance and intervention

You may contact the following agencies to obtain assistance and intervention for cases of abuse:

- Child and Family Guidance Center 972-351-3490
- Children First Counseling Center 972-264-0604
- Galaxy Counseling Center Anger Management Program/Sexual Abuse Treatment/General Counseling 972-272-4429
- Jewish Family Services of Greater Dallas 972-437-9950
- Victims Outreach 214-358-5173
- Youth and Family Counseling 972-724-2005

WDS Training

All employees of the WDS are required to receive trainings which address different aspects of abuse, neglect and the exploitation of children. These topics include:

- Prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children
- Warning signs and contributing factors of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Reporting incidents of abuse and neglect

Employee Discipline Investigation Policy

This policy provides employees with the WDS's internal processes for managing particular cases when an employee is accused of inappropriate discipline/corporal punishment, abuse or neglect. Please note, the WDS works to keep the identities of any individuals involved in an allegation confidential throughout the investigation. These investigations are individualized for each employee and circumstance. The results of the investigation will be used to determine if further disciplinary action is warranted up to and including termination of employment.

- (1) The Director will complete an incident report with information and any documentation provided by the individual making the claim.
- (2) Within 24 hours, the Director will then contact the WDS's licensing representative and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) to open an independent investigation of the allegation of abuse.
- (3) The Director will then complete the "72 Hour Report" and submit to NAEYC.
- (4) While the TDFPS investigation is ongoing, the WDS will provide direct supervision/support in the classroom where the alleged incident occurred. Supervision may be provided by the Director, ECE Coordinator and/or substitute teacher. **If an employee is directly observed by a WDS employee and/or parent/legal guardian abusing, neglecting and/or utilizing corporal punishment, the employee will be removed from the classroom until the investigation by the TDFPS is closed.**
- (5) The Director will then notify the parents/family members of the classroom, Executive Committee of the WDS Board of Directors, and key UPUMC personnel of the allegation and impending investigation.
- (6) The Director will then share the TDFPS investigation results with the following stakeholders:
 - Employee being investigated
 - Individual who reported the incident
 - Parents/Family members of the classroom
 - Executive Committee of the WDS Board of Directors
 - NAEYC
 - All parents/guardians (if the investigation results in a violation)