



# Parent Handbook

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## APPENDIX I

By 16 months children are required to have the following vaccinations:

2. Three DTP/DtaP/DPT
3. Three HIB (preferred) or at-least one
4. Two IPV
5. One MMR
6. Two Hep B
7. Three Pneumococcal

By 19 months children are required to have the following vaccinations:

1. Four DTP/DtaP/DPT
2. Three HIB
3. Three IPV
4. One MMR
5. Three Hep B
6. One Varicella
7. One Hep A followed by second dose after six months

Booster shots are required for all children on or by their fifth birthday. Boosters include:

2. One DtaP
3. One IPV
4. One Measles

*Dear Parents:*

*Welcome to Southwood Learning Center. We appreciate this opportunity to work with you and your child and we hope to build a lasting relationship of confidence and trust.*

*We strive to provide a nurturing environment that allows children to develop the skills needed to be successful in life. Our goal is to help your child develop socially, mentally, physically, and emotionally. Responsibility, independence, and respect are integrated into our daily program. We encourage children to accept and appreciate their individual differences and cultural family traditions.*

*We invite you to observe your child in their classroom setting and become a part of our Southwood Learning Center Family.*

*Your suggestions and comments are always welcome and deeply appreciated. Once again, thank you for allowing your child to be a part of our lives.*

*Sincerely,*

*The Southwood Learning Center Family*

## **POLICY**

Southwood Learning Center is a private school open to all children regardless of religion, race, nationality, or creed. Our facility is licensed for children 18 months through kindergarten.

## **CURRICULUM**

We offer two compatible programs; Montessori and the Discovery curriculum. Both curricula are based on self-paced learning and creative thinking. The Montessori method emphasizes individual tasks and encourages each child to work in specific interest areas including: Language, mathematics, science, sensorials, practical life, geography, and art. The Discovery curriculum, is an interest center-based program, promoting group interaction and social development. Children choose from a variety of independent and group activities which include: Blocks, small manipulatives, puzzles, dramatic play, science, literacy, art, music and technology.

### **The Montessori Rooms**

Montessori (pronounced MON-tuh-SORE-ee) education was founded in 1907 by Dr. Maria Montessori, the first woman in Italy to become a physician. She based her educational methods on scientific observation of children's learning processes. Guided by her discovery that children teach themselves, Dr. Montessori designed a "prepared environment" in which children could freely choose from a number of developmentally appropriate activities. Now, nearly a century after Maria Montessori's first casa dei bambini ("children's house") in Rome, Montessori education is found all over the world, spanning ages from birth to adolescence.

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR EXPERIENCE**

1. In the morning, leave your child at school with a positive attitude and a SMILE!
2. Encourage your child to tell you about their day, on the way home is a great time.
3. Discuss concerns and questions with your child's teacher.
4. Participate in school activities.
5. Allow your child to complete their activity and clean up their work area when you pick them up.
6. Attend Parent meetings and conferences.
7. Review your child's work with them at home.
8. Read to your child regularly.

**Local Texas Department Protective and Regulatory  
Services Information**

Brazos County office of TDPRS (979)776-3637

Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline 1(800) 252-5400

TDPRS Website [www.tdprs.state.tx.us](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us)

Montessori emphasizes learning through all five senses, not just through listening, watching, or reading. Children in Montessori classes learn at their own, individual pace and according to their own choice of activities from hundreds of possibilities. Learning is an exciting process of discovery, leading to concentration, motivation, self-discipline, and a love of learning.

The Montessori method uses materials specifically designed to stimulate the child's interest and foster an appreciation for learning. Teachers encourage social interaction, cooperation, respect and personal responsibility, thereby creating an environment which promotes growth and harmony.

The Discovery curriculum offers a compatible approach to the Montessori method, using a center-based program that facilitates creative thinking. Children experience the joy of discovery by using their imagination to explore and understand the world through a number of class projects. The centers enhance the areas studied in the Montessori Room and offer additional development in literacy, music appreciation, research, dramatic play, and technology.

In addition to these two curricula, we believe that cultural appreciation is an important part of development, especially in today's diverse world. To meet this need, a cultural enrichment program is offered in the afternoons for our Montessori classes. Children have an opportunity to learn fine arts and explore the world's varying cultures. Our goal is to encourage children to take pride in their heritage, as well as appreciate the differences in the world around us.

### **The Stepping Stone I and II Rooms**

This transitional classroom combines a basic introduction to Montessori principles with the Discovery curriculum. Children's senses are stimulated through various activities designed to foster language development, numerical knowledge, art, music, and creative exploration.

In addition to enhancing the child's educational experience, our goal is to nurture the child's whole spirit. Teachers foster the development of respect for self, others, and the environment through interactions with peers and teachers.

Children are required to be potty trained before entering Stepping Stones II.

### **The Seedling Room**

The toddler classroom is often a child's first experience in a daycare and classroom setting. As the child transitions from the routines of home to school, a period of adjustment is natural. Patience, tenderness and warmth are especially important at this age. Our teachers are committed to providing a nurturing environment while working to enhance motor skill development, sharing, communication, independence and potty training.

This class is designed to appeal to the toddler's natural physical, emotional, and sensorial needs. The daily schedule allows children to enjoy many new experiences, without becoming overwhelmed.

### **Enrollment**

In order to provide the safest environment for your child, we ask that all enrollment forms, emergency cards and \*immunization records\* be completed and turned in before your child's first day of school.

work with our teachers and children (under our supervision only) in order to gain experience.

### **Questions and Concerns**

If you have concerns or questions about the class, your child's progress and/or behavior, we encourage you to speak directly with your child's teacher. As we are sure you realize, sometimes the afternoons can be hectic and you may not be able to discuss issues to your satisfaction, feel free to set up an appointment to speak with your child's teacher at any point throughout the year, our teachers will be happy to discuss any concerns you may have. If you have concerns which you feel are not being adequately addressed by talking to the teacher, please let us know **immediately** and we will set up an appointment with either the Director or Business Manager.

### **Minimum Standards**

The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS) requires all preschools to adhere to a set of, "Minimum Standard Rules" in order to be compliant and operate a preschool facility. Our goal at SWLC is to reach beyond the "minimums" and provide the highest quality care for your child. However, we do use the Minimum Standard Rules as a guideline to assist with providing the best preschool environment for your child. If you wish to review the standards, a copy is available in the office upon request. A copy of the most current Licensing Review is posted on the front bulletin board.

encouraged to volunteer at any time throughout the school year and your time is greatly appreciated. Any parent who wishes to volunteer on a set schedule, will be asked to go through a brief volunteer orientation and complete corresponding paperwork.

### **Parent Communication**

We believe that open communication between parents and teachers is an essential part of providing a healthy environment for our students. Parents can check the parent board outside of the classroom to see the daily theme. The front office area has individual mailboxes which should be checked daily for items regarding both school policies and individual information (such as receipts etc.) Monthly lesson plans and calendars give parents a chance to see what units were covered in each room as well as general school events and snacks being provided. Classroom projects and lesson plans are sent home either daily or weekly (varies from class to class). Anytime there are specific concerns or questions, please speak directly to your child's teacher. Primary form of communication regarding events at school and lessons is done through email.

### **Pictures**

Individual pictures are taken in both the fall and spring semesters. Group pictures will be taken in the spring only. Parents are under no obligation to purchase these pictures. We will be taking snap shots of the children throughout the year.

We reserve the right to use the photos for parent meetings and school advertisements.

### **Interns**

Throughout the year, we will have student interns from Texas A&M and Blinn. They will be here to observe and

**All children are required to present a physician's statement acknowledging that he/she is able to attend school within 12 months of admission into the school.**  
**All children are required to have a vision and hearing test by their fourth birthday according to state licensing regulations.**

As part of our commitment to providing a healthy and safe environment, all forms are required to be updated on each child's birth date. Parents will be asked to review, update, sign and date the forms every year.

Parents will be given written notification for any missing information. You will have ten working days in which to comply with all updates or show proof of a scheduled appointment with a physician. In order to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all children, we will not be able to allow your child to return to school if you are not in compliance at the end of that ten day period.

\*See attached immunization sheet for requirements. Please be aware that immunization requirements may change periodically. You will be required to follow the most current requirements in order for your child to attend SWLC.

### **Registration Fee**

A one-time non-refundable fee of \$75 is payable upon the receipt of acceptance of your child into our program.

### **Supply Fee**

A \$75 supply fee will be collected in September and February which will provide for annual supplies, a school t-shirt, one nap mat, sunscreen and insect repellent (permission slips will be required for application of sunscreen and repellent). Supply fees are prorated for those children who start later in the year.

**Tuition**

Tuition is due on a monthly basis in twelve equal payments. We ask that tuition be paid by the first of every month. Payments received after the fifth will be subject to a late fee of \$10 per day. A \$25 fee will be assessed for all returned checks.

A five percent discount is offered if you choose to pay a year’s tuition up front.

If for any reason you decide to withdraw your child from our facility, we require a two-week written notice for consideration of prorating your tuition.

In appreciation of referrals to our program, we offer a \$100 credit after the child has been with us for three months.

**Hours**

Southwood Learning Center is open year round, five days a week, except for the specific holidays listed in the, “holiday schedule.” Our hours are from 7am-5:45pm. Please have your child to school by 9am to ensure maximum participation.

**Late Fees**

A late-pick up fee will be assessed if children are not picked up on time. If you know that you are going to be detained, please inform the school immediately.

**Late fees:**

5:45-5:50pm	\$5.00
For every five minutes after that	\$2.00

You will be notified of any late fees. Late fee charges will be added to tuition for the following month.

solutions to help the child. Our policy for this behavior requires that a child who bites three times in one day must go home for the remainder of the day. Children who continue to bite over a period of time may be suspended or expelled.

**Parent Conferences**

During the month of May, we will have a parent conference day. Parents will have the opportunity to meet with the teacher and review your child’s progress throughout the past year. **SWLC will be closed for Parent Conferences.**

In October, we will have “mini-conferences.” These are designed to give parents an opportunity to meet individually with your child’s teacher and discuss the goals for the upcoming year if you wish. These will be scheduled throughout October during the school day if you wish to participate in them.

Parents are also welcome to set up appointments with your child’s teacher throughout the year if you have any questions or concerns.

**Parent Meetings**

We will have a general parent meeting at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. This will be a time to discuss general upcoming events, school policies, fundraisers, parent projects and any other topics that may arise. It is also a great time for the parents to meet each other.

**Parents as Volunteers**

Throughout the year we will have a number of activities that will require the help of our parents. We will send home information regarding these opportunities, as well as post it on the front door. Parents are welcome and

3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Additionally TDPRS Minimum Standards (2006) states that 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
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.

Anytime a child engages in behavior, which results in another child being hurt, we will inform parents both verbally and with a written "incident report." If a child continues to be disruptive and a distraction to the class, parents will be contacted for discussion of the unacceptable behavior and will be told of the action taken thus far. We will then work together to find solutions to help the child. However, ongoing disruptive behavior may result in suspension and /or dismissal from the school.

### **Biting Behaviors**

Toddlers will sometimes engage in biting until they are better able to communicate. While we understand that this is a developmental stage that some toddlers go through, we also have to meet the needs of the whole group. We believe the best approach to end this behavior is to work very closely with the child and the parents to find

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

Please use the front entrance when dropping off your child. Parents are asked to sign their child in daily at the front register upon arrival and then escort them to where their class is. In order to minimize interruption, we ask you allow a teacher to escort late arrivals into the classroom.

At the end of the day, please sign your child out at the front register. Children may be picked up from their classroom or outside (weather permitting). If the children are playing outside, please come into the school and pick them up from the outdoor playground entrances. **PLEASE DO NOT PICK UP YOUR CHILD FROM THE OUTSIDE GATE.**

### **Authorization To Pick Up Child**

Only those persons listed on the enrollment form and emergency cards will be allowed to pick up your child. Parents are required to provide a written note informing us who will be picking your child up. If someone who is not listed as an emergency contact is picking up your child, please let us know in writing. Identification will be required from all persons picking up your child. In cases of divorce, legal separation, or custody concerns, we require legal verification.

### **Attendance and Absenteeism**

Regular attendance is crucial in order for your child to receive the maxim benefit from our program. Please have your child at school by the beginning of class time. We ask that you notify the school if your child is unable to attend class. **Absenteeism will have no effect on tuition.**

**If your child is absent from school for a minimum of one month (30 days), his/her spot will be held provided**

**that one-half of your regular monthly tuition is paid for each month that your child is not in attendance. If your child is absent for anything less than one month, full tuition is owed.**

### **Illness**

Please do not send your child to school with a temperature that exceeds 100.4 orally or 99.4 underarm. **Children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Children with rashes or eye infections will not be allowed to attend without a doctor's release.

Children who have uncontrolled diarrhea or two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours **may not attend** until they are **symptom free for 24 hours.**

If your child develops any symptoms of illness, including the ones mentioned above or a fever over 100.4°F orally or 99.4°F underarm while at school, we will notify you and ask that you pick him/her up as soon as possible. **Your child may not return to school until they have been symptom free for 24 hours or you have a physician's release.**

### **Emergencies**

In case of accidental injury or sudden illness, proper care will be given and an **immediate attempt to contact a parent** will be made. If a parent cannot be contacted, we will notify an emergency contact. Should it be deemed necessary, an ambulance or other emergency personnel will be notified. The Director or another staff member will be in charge and make all decisions regarding the care of your child until the arrival of the parent or the emergency aid. It is imperative that we are kept current of all health concerns and phone/emergency numbers. Any

### **Birthdays**

We will celebrate birthdays during afternoon snack time. Parents are welcome to attend their child's celebration. We prefer that you send healthy birthday treats, such as muffins, pudding, veggie/cheese tray, or fruit kabobs. Additionally, we ask that you not send birthday invitations or favors to school, unless you are sending them for the whole class. Please check the ingredients of all items to make sure that there are no peanuts, peanut butter, or peanut oil

If you wish, you may make a book donation to our school for your child's birthday.

### **Show and Tell Days**

Wednesdays will be show and tell days. If your child has a special item that is **educationally enhancing**, please encourage them to bring it to school on Wednesdays. There will be special group time in the mornings where children will have the opportunity to discuss their show and tell item. The last Wednesday of each month is reserved for toys.

Toys, money, cosmetics, children's purses, gum and candy are to be left at home.

### **Discipline Procedures**

The full extent of our discipline includes verbal communication with the child in order to redirect and/or isolation from an activity. Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services mandates in their Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers (2006) that discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child.
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding

## **Transportation**

Any transportation of children for a field trip will be on a school van. If you are a chaperone for a field trip, you may transport your child only, in your own vehicle.

## **Special Events**

### **Parties**

Throughout the year, we will have a number of parties for special occasions. Parents can help by providing food, prizes, and/or volunteering during the event. All assistance will be greatly appreciated.

### **Splash Days**

During the summer months the children participate in “Splash Days” (water sprinkler play). We ask that you please send bathing suits and towels. If for some reason you or your child do not wish to participate, please inform us.

### **Guest Speakers**

We will bring in special guest speakers/presenters to share skills and experiences with the children throughout the year. All presentations will be under staff supervision. If you would like to share an item or an experience with us, please let us know.

### **School Lunch Days**

Throughout the year, we will offer special opportunities for the children to purchase lunch at school. Lunches will either be prepared on site, or provided through local restaurants. Suggestions for meal ideas are welcome. Participation is not required.

expenses incurred during an emergency will be the responsibility of the parent.

## **Medication**

We ask that all medications, including over the counter medication, be properly marked with the child’s name and date. Written permission is required to dispense the medication and it will be administered according to label directions or as amended by a physician and only at the times indicated on the medication log. The medication log will be located at the front office window, please fill it out each day that medicine is to be administered. Medication must be handed to a staff member and not left in bags, lunch boxes etc.

We can only administer OTC medication if it is approved for your child’s age, unless you have a physician’s release.

## **Nutrition**

A healthy day begins with a healthy breakfast. Please ensure that your child eats a proper breakfast before coming to school, as we do not serve it here.

Please send a nutritious lunch consisting of a protein, fruits and/or vegetables, and grains with your child daily. We ask that you refrain from sending high sugar and high fat foods such as candy, cokes, chips, cakes, and cookies. These items will be returned unopened. A list of food suggestions is provided on line. There will be special opportunities for your child to purchase lunch throughout the year, see “Special Events” section for more details.

Southwood is a peanut free school. For the safety of all out children, please do not send any peanuts, or peanut butter items.

Healthy snacks are provided twice daily for the children; once in the morning and once in the afternoon. The morning snack is served with milk and the afternoon snack is served with juice. A monthly menu is posted in each class.

### **Supplies**

Please provide the following items for your child: a complete change of clothes, a lunch box/bag, a washable mat, and blanket. For children who are not potty-trained, please send diapers/pull-ups and wipes.

\*Blankets and pillows should be taken home on Fridays to be cleaned.\*

### **School Clothing**

It is recommended that children's clothes be comfortable and allow for freedom of movement. As part of developing their independence, we suggest that you dress your child in clothes that are easy for them to handle.

Though our children will be wearing smocks during various art projects, accidental spills may occur. Please keep this in mind when dressing your child for the day.

Dressing in layers is suggested, especially during the cooler seasons. Parents are responsible for providing sweaters, coats, hats, and gloves.

Comfortable shoes are required. We ask that flip-flops and cowboy boots not be worn to school for safety reasons.

### **Lost or Damaged Items**

Southwood Learning Center is not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items.

### **Holiday and Vacations**

Our school will closed for Martin Luther King Day, part of spring-break (Wednesday-Friday), Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving (Wednesday-Friday), and part of the Christmas/New Year holidays. Holidays are scheduled according to the College Station ISD schedule, except for the Good Friday holiday. Holidays/Vacations have no effect on tuition.

In the event of severe weather, we will follow CSISD with regard to closures. We will have a message on the answering machine and will inform KBTX-TV.

### **Visits To The School**

At SWLC we have an open-door policy which means that you are welcome to visit and observe our school at anytime during hours of operation without prior notification. We request that upon arrival you inform the office that you are visiting the facility.

### **Field Trips**

We will host a number of on-site field trips for the Montessori/Discovery classes that will give the children an opportunity to experience and participate in community activities. Parents are welcome to help chaperone and join the fun. Occasionally, we may take the Montessori class on a field trip. We will give advanced notice for all field trips and parents will be required to sign permission slips every time that we go on a field trip. We will also post a reminder sign on the door 48 hours in advance. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as chaperones for the field trips.