

# **Parent Handbook**

## **of Policies and Procedures**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to Learning Tree Preschool! We are excited you have joined our preschool family. If you have any questions about our handbook, our classroom, or our policies, please ask.

### **A Little About Myself**

My name is Lisa Lundervold. I am the owner and teacher here at Learning Tree Preschool. I have been married for 31 years and have four wonderful sons and two grandchildren. I studied Early Childhood Education in Washington State where I grew up. Teaching young children has truly been a passion for me, and I am honored to be able to spend a few hours a day with your child. It is my goal to help your child develop the dispositions and skills to become life- long learners (both socially and academically).

### **We Believe**

Children learn best through play and hands-on experiences. We firmly believe that children learn by doing, getting messy, investigating their questions, and problem solving with their friends. They learn by playing games, using their imaginations, expressing their emotions, creating, and exploring the world around them. The program is based on current knowledge of child development and early childhood education.

### **Curriculum**

Learning Tree Preschool implements a theme- based curriculum. It is designed to facilitate learning through hands-on activities both teacher-led and student-led. As teachers we set up intentional play activities and explorations that meet the needs of individual students. Learning centers are set up in the classroom, ie. writing table, art -work materials, table activities (manipulatives, puzzles, matching, sorting, playdough), math and literacy, block and transportation, library area and language, science table, sensory table, easel, dramatic play area. Age appropriate music, stories, games, and fingerplays are part of the daily activities. We question and extend their thinking and play to help them learn and grow. We strive to provide high quality education and care for every student who comes in our classroom.

## Hours of Operation

Learning Tree Preschool is open:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday AM Class 8:30-11:30

Monday, Wednesday, Friday PM Class: 12:30-3:30

Tuesday, Thursday AM Class: 8:30-11:30

Tuesday, Thursday AM Class: 12:30-3:30

## Closures

The following days are paid holidays. Labor Day, Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents Day and Spring Break. I also receive 2 paid personal days through- out the year. Parents will receive 2 weeks written notice for these personal days. If additional personal days are needed (i.e. funeral, medical reasons, family emergency, personal needs), I will take these days off, unpaid, as needed. We follow the Sherman School District inclement weather closures and delays.

## Eligibility

In order to register for preschool, each child must meet the following criteria:

- Be 3 years old by September 1st
- Proof of current required immunizations
- Health Statement: A written statement from a health-care professional who has examined your child within the last year. Indicating the child is- able- to take part in the preschool program.
- Hearing and Vision Testing screening
- Complete all enrollment forms and pay \$50 registration fee.
- Be completely potty trained
- Statement of child's special care needs if any.

## Licensing

Learning Tree Preschool is licensed with the Texas Health and Human Services. The preschool will continue to have inspections and a copy of the most recent licensing inspection is posted on the parent board. You may review the minimum standards, online at [www.dfps.state.tx.us/child\\_care](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care).

Licensing local office: **550 E 15<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Suite 120**

**Plano, Tx 75074**

**1-469-229-6900 Ext: 6901**

**Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400**

## Daily Arrival and Pick Up

Please arrange arrival time to be no earlier than the scheduled class time as the teacher needs the time before class for preparation. Please have your child put their belongings such as: coat and backpack in their cubby. Have your child wash their hands before sitting down for morning table time. Prompt pick-up of your child at the end of class is also necessary. Please notify us of any emergency or situations that occurs that may prevent you or someone else listed in our files from picking your child up on time. A late pick-up fee of \$2.00 a minute will be charged for any child in our care after the end the scheduled class.

Only custodial parents/guardians and those listed on approved pick-up list will be allowed to pick up a child. Identification is required at pick-up. It is required that anyone listed on your emergency contact list must be 18 years of age. We cannot release your child to anyone under the age of 18.

## Sign in and Sign Out

All students must be signed in and signed out by an adult every day that they attend.

## Items from Home

Please do not allow your child to bring items from home unless it is a security item, or you have pre-arranged with me a day to share a special item. Learning Tree Preschool is not responsible for any lost or broken items.

## Illness

Please keep your child at home if they are sick. This will prevent others from catching the illness. Children may return to school **24 HOURS AFTER:**

- Fever of 100 degrees or above
  - Contagious skin or eye irritation
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea, more than three times in 2 hours
  - Cough lasting more than 1 week without a doctor's note
  - Discharge from the eyes, nose or ears
  - Sore throat especially associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck.
  - Rashes that are not associated with an allergic reaction to food or medication
  - Appearance and behavior changes: including unusual tiredness, paleness, confusion, irritability, excessive crying with the inability to be consoled.
- Any illness that prevents a child from participating in regular activity.

If your child displays any of these symptoms while in our care, we will call you and your child will need to be picked up within one hour.

If Learning Tree Preschool has reason to believe your child has a communicable disease, we can request that he/she be seen by a doctor and that a note be

provided from the doctor stating that your child is not contagious, is able to attend and participate in a group care facility. If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, you need to notify Learning Tree Preschool so we can notify other families.

## **Absences**

Please notify the teacher if your child will be absent from school for a long period of time due to illness or vacation. Parents are expected to pay full tuition if the absence is less than a month. If the child is gone for a month or longer, parents will have two options. (1) If they want to ensure a place for their child when they return, they, would pay tuition for their child. (2) If they do not pay tuition and there is someone on the waiting list, the vacancy would be filled. However, if their place has not been filled when they return, they may re-enter without paying an additional registration fee.

## **Provider Sick Days**

Payment will not be collected for a provider sick day. Sick days will be used to care for myself or a sick family member. I will notify parents as early as possible when a closing is necessary due to illness.

## **Payment**

Tuition payments may be paid annually or monthly (10 payments). If paid monthly, payment is due the first Monday of the month (September-June). There is a \$50 registration fee that is due upon application. All registration fees are non-refundable. There is a \$25 fee for NSF checks. Tuition payments can be made with cash/check or with credit or debit cards through the HiMama App.

If tuition payments are not received, there will be a \$10 per day late fee. If your account exceeds one week over- due, your account will need to be made current or your child will not be allowed to come to school and will be dismissed from our school.

Two -week notice is required if your child needs to drop preschool. This is necessary so that children on the waiting list can be notified that an opening is available. Pro-rated tuition refunds are available during a pre-paid month if a child is withdrawn with a two- week prior notice.

<b>Monthly Tuition Rates:</b> Monday/Wednesday/Friday	\$200
Tuesday/Thursday	\$145

## **Medication**

Prescribed medication will not be administered at school. This is a half day program so medication can be given before or after school by a parent or guardian.

## **Sunscreen/ Insect repellent**

If you would like your child to wear sunscreen or insect repellent, please apply it before your child comes to preschool.

## **Injury/Medical Emergencies**

In case of a minor injury, we will administer basic first- aid. All injuries require immediate parental notification, will be documented in the form of an Accident report and notified via text message, email or phone call.

In case of a minor injury in which an ambulance is not needed but immediate medical attention is required, I will contact the parents. If parents cannot be reached emergency contacts will be notified.

Learning Tree Preschool staff cannot transport students to a hospital or doctor's office. Injured students shall be transported for medical attention by parents or calling 911 for an ambulance.

## **Immunizations**

Your child must be up to date on immunizations as required by the Texas state regulations. A copy of your child's immunizations will be kept on file.

## **Photographs and Videos**

As- a -way to document student learning and share all the wonderful activities and learning happening in our classroom, I take photos and videos of our learning.

These pictures and videos will be displayed in the classroom, on the Learning Tree Preschool website and Facebook page and in the children's portfolios. You will be asked to sign a form to either give or not give permission for your child to be photographed and videoed in the classroom.

## **Newsletters**

Each week, I will publish a newsletter to update you on what exciting topics we are learning about and other things happening in preschool. The newsletter will include important dates, upcoming activities and events, a summary of previous learning, previewing new centers and studies. I will email the newsletter every Monday to all the families. I will also post the newsletter on the parent board.

## **Visitor Policy and Volunteers**

We have an open-door policy at Learning Tree Preschool. Parents and families are welcome to visit the class at any time. When class is in session Parents should slip in quietly to observe. Visiting with other parents should take place outside so as not to disturb the children's learning.

## **Book Orders**

Each month I will send home Scholastic Book orders. Please do not feel obligated to buy anything. I will use the points I earn to buy new books for our classroom library. There are two ways you can order books. You can go online to [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com) and order the books with our school ID# or you can order books using the paper order form. Please make the checks payable to "Scholastic". The completed paper order forms need to be turned into me. It usually takes about two weeks to receive the books.

## **Family Take Home File**

Each day when you drop off/pick up your child, it is important that you check your family take home file for important information and all the wonderful art your child has created at preschool. Your family file is labeled with your child's name and located next to the cubbies

## **Parent Teacher Conferences**

Parent Teacher Conferences are held in the Fall and Spring. It is a time we can talk about your child in all areas of development, review their student portfolio, and set goals for your child. If at any time during the school year you have any concerns and wish to have a meeting, please let me know and we can schedule one.

## **Communication**

It is important for us to work as a team to ensure your child's success in preschool. If you have any questions, concerns, or any other important information that you believe I should know, please do not hesitate to contact me. Parents will be notified of any changes made to policies or procedures. Parents will receive a paper copy to sign and return that will be kept in your child's file. If there are any other notifications that parents need to be informed of, parents will be notified by one or, all of the following; email, text message, phone call or a classroom notification on the Parent board.

## **HiMama App**

We are proud to be using a program called HiMama! I will be using HiMama in the classroom to record activities and to document updates throughout the day. You will be able to see what's going on in the classroom through pictures, activity updates and messages whether you are at work, home or on the go through the HiMama mobile app. You will have the option to make secure tuition payments through the HiMama app with your bank account or debit or credit card. You can download "HiMama - The Childcare App." Check your email inbox - we'll be sending your invitation shortly!

## **Emergency Preparedness**

In the event of an emergency Learning Tree Preschool has developed an Emergency Response Plan. We will make every attempt to notify you, so it is vital you keep your emergency contact information up to date. A copy of the Emergency Response Plan will be given to all families at the time of enrollment.

## **Emergency Drills**

At Learning Tree Preschool, we strive to make sure our children are safe at school every day. We do this by making sure our children are prepared for a variety of emergencies. We will practice fire drills (once a month), tornado drills (quarterly) and lock down drills (quarterly).

## **Emergency Supplies**

Our classroom is equipped with an emergency backpack. It contains water, pre-packaged snacks, gloves, wipes, first aid kit, thermal blanket's, flashlight, hand sanitizer, paper plates, utensils, a copy of our emergency Response Plan, each child's contact and emergency information, and any life- saving medication (epi-pens, inhalers). We also keep a small first aid kit in the classroom for minor cuts and scrapes. In the event, that we are contained in the classroom for an extended, period -of- time, past normal business hours. I do keep a supply of food and water at the preschool.

## **Snack**

Each family will be responsible for sending healthy, nutritious snacks for the whole class approximately twice a month. Parents are encouraged to send a snack (related to their culture if they like). Please let me know if special arrangements are needed. Due to licensing requirements all foods brought from home need to be either whole fruits or vegetables, or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers. Suggested snacks are apples, oranges, raisins, celery or carrot sticks and ranch dip, Jell-O, crackers, cheese, pretzels. Occasionally your child will have the opportunity to cook or otherwise prepare special foods at school for a snack and the teacher may ask that certain ingredients to be sent. Learning Tree Preschool will provide either milk, or juice. Water is always available to the children during class. We usually have 10 children in class. We discourage cakes, cupcakes, or cookies unless it is to celebrate a birthday. If your child has special dietary restrictions, please send acceptable snacks for your child. Also please alert me as well as indicating for restrictions on the child's emergency information form. If for any reason providing a snack for the class is a financial hardship, please let me know.

## **Birthdays**

A birthday is a very, special day for children. We would love to celebrate your child's birthday at preschool. If you would like you may bring in commercially made treats to share with the class. If your child's birthday falls on someone else's snack day, we can arrange to switch days.

## **Smoke Free Environment**

Learning Tree Preschool has a no smoking policy throughout the school (indoors and outdoors) to respect the health and safety of our families and students.

## **Animal and Pet Policy**

Caring for and interacting with pets at Learning Tree Preschool is a special part of our preschool curriculum. Children learn to care respectfully for creatures and are given the opportunity to nurture other living things.

- Classroom pets and/or visiting animals need to be in good health.
- Pets and/or visiting animals must have documentation from a veterinarian to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected).
- Teacher supervises all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when, in close, proximity to animals
- Teacher makes sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal.
- Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of risk of salmonella infection.
- Teacher and children will wash their hands with soap and water after touching or holding any animal.

## **Field Trips**

Special trips away from preschool may be scheduled throughout the year. Parents will be asked to assist in these excursions by providing transportation for their child and adult supervision is needed. Since your full attention will be needed with the class, childcare arrangements need to be made for other children in the family.

## **Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation-**

I am mandated by state law to report to the Texas Health and Human Services, Child Protective Services or a law enforcement agency any instance where there is a cause to believe that child abuse, neglect or exploitation may have occurred. Employees will receive annual training on increasing awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of, or at risk of abuse or neglect. Information on increasing Parent awareness of



prevention techniques for abuse and neglect will be posted on the Parent Board. If a Parent or Guardian has reason to believe their child or any child has been a victim of abuse or neglect the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline is: **1-800-252-5400** Information is available upon request for Parents on assistance and intervention for your child if they are a victim of abuse or neglect.

## **Clothing**

Comfortable play clothes are best for preschool. These should be clothes that encourage self-help and do not discourage participation in some of the messier activities, such as painting and gluing. No crocs, flip flops or sandals should be worn to preschool. Tennis shoes are the best for running and jumping. Please Label all outer garments including hats and boots with your child's name.

## **Backpack**

Please have your child bring a backpack with a change of clothes for those occasional spills or accidents on days that he/she is at preschool.

## **Assessment**

The purpose of assessment is to collect information on children's learning and development. Assessment tools assist the teacher in gathering information on all areas of children's development and learning, including cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, approaches to learning, health, and physical development (including self-help skills). Assessments provide teachers with curriculum development and daily planning in the classroom.

Assessment begins the moment we first meet a child. Children are assessed continually throughout the year with check points in the Fall and Spring. Parent/Teacher conferences are held once a year (and individually on an as needed basis) to celebrate children's learning. Conferences are a time for parents and teachers to share goals for children and to discuss a child's progress. If a teacher and/or a parent has a concern a special conference can be scheduled. Teachers and families have the opportunity to meet and discuss their child's development through daily interactions, phone calls and written notes.

Our approach to assessment is to use a wide variety of tools, which include:

### **Observation-**

- Running records      -Checklist      -Photographs/Video

### **Games-**

- Individual/Group Rhyming Activities      -Color/shape recognition
- Number Recognition      -Letter Naming

### **Portfolio-**

- Children's work sample

### **Interviews-**

- Eliciting Responses -Questions/Answers -Dictation -Charts -Quotes

## **Discipline and Behavior Management**

Discipline for young children means guidance towards self-control. Discipline is helping. Discipline is guiding children toward control of their actions because they want to from within and not because they will be punished if they do not.

Discipline is helping children make decisions and be responsible for their own behaviors. At Learning Tree Preschool, we are committed to providing a safe environment for learning. Universal support strategies are available to all students to support their social emotional development by teaching expected behaviors and teaching various social skills (sharing, taking turns, problem solving) all year long.

We try our best to provide a consistent, challenging learning environment with physical activity which prevents boredom and promotes good behavior.

If a behavior issue arises the teacher may use a verbal redirection, state the expected behavior, give behavior choices, provide a visual support, and/or go to the safe spot. The safe place is a quiet, cozy place in the classroom a child can go when they are feeling upset, sad, or just want to be alone. The safe spot also has a Calm Down Kit. It is a basket with items and visual supports to help a child calm down such as: Sensory bottles, squeeze fidget's deep breath chart.

We use Green and Red Choices to teach students appropriate "green behaviors."

It is my goal for students to be happy, confident learners, who can problem solve and work collaboratively with others.

If a child makes inappropriate, dangerous, or destructive choices, an Incident Report will be used to document the behavior and given to parents at pick-up.

Corporal punishment is never used under any circumstances.

If problem behavior continues after trying various strategies or becomes a distraction for the other children in class a meeting with the parent will be arranged to work together to find strategies or solutions for the child to be a successful participant in class.

## **Termination of Enrollment**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to discontinue a child's enrollment at Learning Tree Preschool. This decision will be based on the best interest for children and staff. Termination of enrollment may be a result of the following

- Non-payment of tuition
- Abuse, destructive and/or dangerous behavior to children, staff or property by a child, parent, or family member.
- Failure to follow our Parent Handbook policies and procedures

**Thank You for choosing Learning Tree Preschool. We are so excited you are joining our preschool family. We will love and respect your child. We will help them grow and develop emotionally, socially, physically, and academically!**

I \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agree to the terms of the Learning Tree Preschool Parent Handbook of Policies and Procedures.

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Signature

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Date