



# Parent Handbook

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## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

All aboard! Welcome to the Education Station Child Development Center, just a train stop away from success. At TES, we recognize that each child is unique, and their learning experiences should reflect that individuality. Children progress through their early developmental milestones at their own pace. We believe in nurturing their growth and curiosity, allowing them to move forward when they are confident and ready for more advanced challenges. We empower our students to engineer their own creative minds, providing the necessary tools and space to succeed.

### **Mission Statement**

The Education Station's mission is to provide a safe and caring environment where children of all races, denominations, and economic backgrounds are seen, heard, and able to express their individuality.

### **Operating Hours**

The Education Station is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 6:30 PM. We are closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- 4th of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

## **PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

### **Curriculum Goals**

Our goal is to create a learning environment that addresses the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of each child using the Circle curriculum method. Our lesson plans follow the guidelines provided by Texas Rising Star, a quality rating system for Texas early childhood programs. Each lesson plan and activity are carefully planned around a weekly theme. Our curriculum is organized in a planned progression that introduces skills

and concepts in an age-appropriate order throughout the year. This ensures children build on prior knowledge and develop confidence as they master new skills.

- *Infants to 36 Months*: Focus on visual, auditory, and hands-on learning to encourage exploration. Sensory-based lessons cover the following areas:
  - Social & Emotional
  - Language & Communication Development
  - Cognitive Development
  - Physical Development
- *Older Children (3-12 Years)*: Utilize discovery centers for large and small group activities, as well as individualized instruction. Students advance through lessons in:
  - Social & Emotional
  - Language & Communication
  - Emergent Literacy (Reading & Writing)
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Fine Arts
  - Technology

### **Field Trips**

The Education Station may schedule field trips for students. You will be required to sign a permission form on the day of each trip, allowing us to transport your child to the designated location.

### **Screentime Policy**

At TES, screentime is not our primary choice for supporting learning and development. However, we recognize its benefits for certain subjects. Screentime is used solely for educational purposes to enhance the Circle curriculum, is age-appropriate, and limited to under an hour a day. It is not used during meals, snacks, or nap times, and no advertisements or violence are allowed. School-age children may use computers without restrictions to complete homework.

### **Naps**

Nap or rest time is provided for children under 5 years old in the early afternoon.

## **Outdoor Activities**

We encourage outdoor play to promote physical and mental health. Each class goes outside twice daily for 30 minutes, unless weather or heat conditions are prohibitive.

## **Water Activities**

During the summer, The Education Station hosts “Splash Day,” where a sprinkler is set up on the playground for water play. You must provide permission on the enrollment form, along with safe footwear, sunscreen, a towel, and a water-safe bag for wet clothes.

## **ENROLLMENT**

### **Admission Policy**

Before starting, your child will need:

1. Completed and signed enrollment form.
2. Physician's statement of good health.
3. Required immunizations as per Texas Department of Health and Human Services.
4. Parental authorization for emergency medical treatment.
5. Completed parent orientation checklist.
6. Filled transportation agreement.
7. Completed picture release.
8. Completed child profile.
9. Completed external preparations release.
10. Reviewed and signed tuition and payment agreement.
11. Completed child allergy form with medical plan if necessary.

## **DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES**

### **Release of a Child**

Parents/guardians must provide a list of authorized persons for child pick-up. Notify us in advance in writing (email, note, or text) with the name and description of the person picking up your child. They must present a valid driver's license or state ID.

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

The drop-off person should enter through the front entrance. A staff member will escort your child to the classroom. Children must be signed in at the front desk. Parents may take children to the classroom if in the child's best interest.

## **Transportation**

We offer transportation to neighboring schools. Check with the front desk for serviced schools. If using our transportation, permission is required on a separate form. Notify us in advance if you pick up your child from school or if they are absent.

### *Update Contact Information*

Update contact or pick-up information by emailing us at [educationstation2017@gmail.com](mailto:educationstation2017@gmail.com). Send any legal documents for custody or visitation updates via email.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

### **Tuition**

Monthly tuition is due by the 5th of each month, with a \$10 daily late fee for overdue payments. Tuition agreements must be signed prior to enrollment. If tuition remains unpaid by the 10th, enrollment may be terminated. Please ensure tuition is paid upon your child's return after an absence on a Monday to avoid late fees. Accepted payment methods include cash, check, money order, and cashier's check. Payments should be made in person.

### **Renewal Fee**

The annual \$150 membership rate is due at time of enrollment and each May, covering application charges, supplies, and insurance.

### **Returned Checks**

A \$35 fee applies for returned checks. After one returned check, accounts become cash-only for six months before returning to original status with timely payments.

### **Refunds**

No refunds are provided for deposits or tuition. However, if extenuating circumstances arise, parents are encouraged to schedule an appointment with the director.

### **Late Pick-Up Charges**

A \$1 per minute late fee applies after 6:30 PM. Extraordinary circumstances like severe weather may exempt this charge.

## **Absences**

No tuition deductions for absences. Notify the front desk early by phone or email if your child is absent. Voluntary withdrawal may occur after 10 days of absence.

## **WITHDRAWAL POLICIES**

### **Separation & Termination**

We provide two weeks' notice prior to care termination. Immediate termination without notice may occur if:

- A child physically or verbally harms others.
- A parent/guardian refuses to collaborate on consistent guidance and discipline.
- A parent/guardian fails to provide completed forms and information.
- A parent or guardian who does not pay childcare fees in accordance with the school's policies.
- A parent or guardian who fails to comply with the handbook and established procedures.

### **Withdrawal**

A two-week written notice is required to withdraw a child from the Education Station. If a child is withdrawn or terminated, payment for the final two weeks is due regardless of attendance. The total amount must be paid prior to the start of the last two-week period.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Parent Conferences**

We offer parent conferences in fall and spring, or by request. Contact the Director or front desk to schedule additional conferences. At The Education Station, parent conferences are an important opportunity to discuss your child's progress, strengths, and areas for growth, and to set goals that support their development. Teachers prepare observations, assessment results, and work samples in advance, while parents are encouraged to reflect on their child's experiences and prepare questions. Conferences are conducted respectfully and confidentially, fostering open communication and collaboration to develop strategies that help your child thrive.

In addition to the scheduled fall and spring conferences, families receive ongoing updates through daily reports and the Parent Engagement app throughout the year. These updates

occur regularly—typically daily or weekly—to keep families informed about their child's daily experiences and progress.

### **Resolving Parental Concerns**

Parents should familiarize themselves with our policies and procedures. We address parental concerns promptly. Discuss issues with the teacher or Director.

### **Parental Notification**

If The Education Station needs to contact you, we will use the numbers listed on your enrollment form. Please update this information as needed. An update form is available at the front desk upon request.

We provide a monthly calendar with upcoming events, daily menu information, daily reports, and lesson plans upon request. A yearly calendar with important dates and school functions is also provided to each family. Don't forget to "Like" our Facebook page for updates and events!

### **Parental Involvement**

We have an open-door policy, allowing parents to visit the center anytime during operational hours without prior notice. Parental involvement is crucial to us, and we encourage participation in the center's activities. Our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child. Feel free to contact us for updates on your child's progress or log into Parent Engagement for real-time updates.

We also invite parents to join us for special events such as parades, parent roundtable discussions, and "Meet the Teacher" sessions. Invitations are extended through multiple channels, including phone calls, emails, posted notices, and reminders via the Parent Engagement app. We encourage all families to join us and actively participate in these events to strengthen our community and support your child's development.

In certain circumstances related to safety and wellness, such as pandemics or communicable diseases, parent visitation may be limited and require advance notice. Parents will be informed via email and Parent Engagement if such policy changes occur.

### **Communication Systems**

Written reports of each child's experiences, progress, and developmental milestones are shared with parents through regular updates, including scheduled reports twice a year—once in the fall and once in the spring. These reports are provided in both printed and digital formats, and include observations, assessments, and recommendations. Additionally, daily reports and ongoing communication via the parent engagement app ensure parents are continuously informed about their child's daily activities and growth. All children

served by the program receive these comprehensive updates to promote transparency and collaboration between families and educators.

### **Parent Feedback**

We value parent input and are committed to continuously improving our program. While we currently provide opportunities for feedback, we welcome suggestions on how we can better serve families. Our process for collecting feedback includes periodic surveys and informal conversations, and all input is reviewed by staff. When appropriate, suggestions are incorporated into program operations to enhance the quality of care and education. We encourage parents to share their thoughts openly and participate in ongoing evaluations to help us create the best possible environment for children.

## **NUTRITION & ALLERGIES**

### **Meals and Snacks**

Menus are posted in the front entry, on classroom bulletin boards, and emailed monthly to parents / guardians at the beginning of each month and follows a four-week rotation. All meals and snacks meet your child's nutritional needs in accordance with the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Meals are prepared in-house daily, complying with health department rules for storage and food temperatures. Meals are served at the following times:

- Breakfast: 7:00 - 9:00 AM
- Lunch: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- PM Snack: 2:30 - 4:00 PM
- Dinner: 4:30 - 5:30 PM

### **Health and Nutrition Practices**

The Education Station is a NUT-FREE ENVIRONMENT; products containing nuts are not allowed. If your child has dietary restrictions or allergies, and you wish to supply food, please ensure meals are nutritionally adequate. Staff have lists of children with specific dietary needs, including allergies.

Parents may breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child. A rocking chair is available in the infant room. If you have additional needs, please inform the front desk.

We offer development training for our teachers on healthy eating and nutrition, and all teachers hold a Texas Food Handler's Certificate.

Additionally, each year, a local dentist visits to educate children on the importance of oral health.

### **Birthdays**

We celebrate each child's special day. If you plan to celebrate at TES, inform your child's teacher for planning. All foods, such as cakes and cupcakes, must be commercially prepared and packaged.

### **Animals**

Our center typically does not allow animals. If an animal visit is planned, a permission slip will be sent in advance for your child's participation.

## **DISCIPLINARY & GUIDANCE POLICIES**

### **Discipline Procedures**

We aim to help children develop self-control and responsibility through positive guidance, offering appropriate choices and setting clear rules. The daycare and each classroom have the following rules:

- No running indoors
- No bullying (physical, verbal, or intimidation)
- No violent play or behavior
- No hitting, kicking, spitting, or pinching
- No mistreatment of toys
- No inappropriate language

*Discipline methods include:*

1. Redirection
2. Time-Out
3. Encouraging self-problem-solving

Corporal punishment is never used, and food is never withheld as punishment.

## **Biting**

Biting can occur in young children under 3. We teach that biting is unacceptable and encourage expressing feelings with words. Prompt action is taken to prevent biting. If biting persists beyond two instances, the child may be released from our school.

## **Challenging Behavior**

Our program emphasizes open, ongoing communication with families to support children exhibiting challenging behaviors. Teachers and staff regularly share updates through the parent engagement app, texts, calls, and meetings, discussing your child's behavior and progress. We believe in collaborating with families to develop consistent strategies that reinforce positive behavior at both school and home. These strategies are tailored to each child's needs and are reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness. Families are kept informed through reports, behavior charts, and scheduled meetings, fostering a partnership focused on your child's growth and well-being.

## **WELLNESS POLICIES**

### **Illness**

Keep your child at home if they are ill to maintain a healthy environment. An ill child should not attend if:

1. They cannot comfortably participate in activities.
2. The illness requires more care than staff can provide.
3. They have:
  - Oral temperature of 100.2°F or higher with symptoms
  - Rectal temperature of 101.2°F or higher with symptoms
  - Armpit temperature of 99.4°F or higher with symptoms
  - Signs of severe illness or communicable disease

### **Medication**

Medication requires authorization and must be logged at the front desk. Administered at 7:00 AM, 11:00 AM, and 3:00 PM, or as requested.

- **Prescription Medication:** Must be in the original container with a pharmacy label.

- **Non-Prescription Medication:** Must be in the original container with the child's name and date. Requires a physician's dosage statement if needed. Expired medications will not be administered.

### **Hearing and Vision Screening**

We offer annual hearing and vision screenings. Texas requires proof of screening for children in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first, and third grades by May 31 each year.

### **Infant Sleep Safe Policy**

At The Education Station, all staff adhere to the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SUIDS).

- Infants are always placed on their backs to sleep.
- Infants sleep on a firm mattress with a tight-fitting sheet in a crib meeting CPSC federal requirements.
- Cribs for infants under 12 months should be bare, except for a tight-fitting sheet and mattress cover. No blankets, linens, or clothing should cover infants' heads or faces.
- Sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners, are not used.
- Sleeping areas are ventilated and maintained at a comfortable temperature for a lightly clothed adult.
- For extra warmth, approved sleep clothing will be discussed with parents.
- Only one infant per crib; pacifiers may be used during sleep.
- If an infant falls asleep in a device like a bouncy chair or car seat, they are moved to a crib immediately.
- Our childcare program is smoke-free.
- Sleeping infants are actively observed by sight and sound.
- Infants able to roll back and forth are placed on their backs and allowed to assume their preferred sleep position.
- Awake infants have supervised "tummy time" several times daily.
- Swaddling for sleep or rest is not permitted.

## **EMERGENCY PLANS**

### **Medical Emergencies**

In a medical emergency, you will be notified immediately, and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital or physician listed on the enrollment forms.

### **Emergency Drills**

- Monthly fire drills and quarterly severe weather drills are conducted to familiarize children with evacuation and relocation procedures.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

In emergencies, procedures ensure children's safety.

### **Evacuation Plans:**

- Employees are responsible for moving children to designated safe areas.
- Evacuation and relocation diagrams are posted as specified by DFPS and local authorities.
- Parents may be called to pick up children, and local authorities may assist in transporting children to an alternate shelter if needed.

### *Alternate Shelter:*

Sugar Land Community Center 226 Matlage Way, Sugar Land, TX 77478

- Upon departure and arrival, the director or assistant checks that all children are present.
- The director or assistant secures children's emergency numbers, medical authorizations, and attendance sheets during emergencies.

## **GENERAL SAFETY POLICIES**

### **Gang Free Zone**

The Education Station is a gang-free zone. Engaging in gang-related or organized criminal activity within 1,000 feet of our center violates the gang-free zone law and is subject to increased penalties under Texas state law.

## **Preventing & Responding to Child Abuse & Neglect**

Annual training for all teachers is mandatory to identify, recognize, and report suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Teachers learn to recognize warning signs and symptoms.

These policies align with the State of Texas Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers, accessible at the web address below. While some policies may seem direct, they ensure the highest quality care for your children.

Inspection reports are available for review online. Contact childcare licensing at 713-940-5200 or 713-940-3009. Report suspicions of child abuse and neglect by calling 1-800-252-5400.

[www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

## **Health Check**

Temperature and illness screenings are conducted upon entry for all staff and children.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONE CHECKLIST**

The Education Station is committed to supporting your child's growth by regularly assessing their progress against age-appropriate developmental milestones using CDC or Texas Rising Star standards. Each child aged five and under is assessed at least once a year. Parents are invited to meet with teachers via conference, phone call, or Zoom to review the results, discuss their child's strengths and areas for growth, and receive resources or guidance as needed. If developmental concerns are identified, the school will collaborate with families to provide appropriate referrals and support. All parents receive a hard copy of the evaluation results, along with ongoing resources to promote their child's development.

## **RIGHTS OF PARENTS OR GUARDIANS**

1. Visit the childcare facility during operating hours without prior notice.
2. Access and review the facility's publicly available records.
3. Receive inspection reports and guidance on accessing the facility's online compliance history.
4. Obtain copies of the facility's policies and procedures.
5. Request to review:
  - a. Staff training records
  - b. Any internal staff training sessions
6. Review written records related to their child.
7. Inspect video recordings of any alleged incidents involving their child, provided that:
  - a. Recordings are available
  - b. They do not keep any part of recordings involving other children
  - c. Other children's parents receive written notice before inspection
8. Ensure the facility complies with court orders preventing unauthorized visits or removal of their child.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT**

The Education Station is dedicated to supporting families and children who may need additional accommodations. Our goal is to create an inclusive environment that respects home languages, diverse abilities, and cultural backgrounds.

Parents have the right to be informed of all procedural safeguards and rights of appeal in both a language easily understood by the general public and the parent's primary language. Please notify the Director if you or your child require accommodations, and we will ensure your needs are met.

We partner with families in the following ways:

- Provide space for speech therapy sessions during the day as needed.
- Participate in comprehensive care meetings if necessary.
- Complete documentation from authorized medical professionals for accommodations related to physical or developmental needs.
- Offer materials and resources in the family's primary language.
- Promote cultural inclusiveness by hosting cultural events throughout the year.