

PARENT HANDBOOK

Policies and Procedures



St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery

612 N. 3rd St. Waco TX.

254-753-5565

Facility's Website

<https://stfrancistordaycare.org>

Director's Name

SYLVIA CASH

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Acknowledgment

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery parent handbook outlines the Facility's expectations, policies, and procedures that all families must understand and comply with. You have received this handbook as a partner in your child's development at St. Francis Kindergarten. After reviewing this document, the consent form on the last page must be completed and handed back to the administration. This consent form states that you understand and adhere to this learning environment's expectations, policies, and procedures.

This handbook will be updated occasionally, and the most up-to-date copy will be made available to you. Thank you for being a part of the St. Francis Kindergarten Family.

Who are we?

History

Fr. Mateo Ramis began to construct the new convent for the religious, kindergarten and Nursery school that today is considered a model of order and good teaching. The religious Franciscan Daughters of Mercy took care of this work from 1962 to the present. Father Mateo Ramis brought them from Mallorca, Spain. Currently, 2 sisters and 18 staff members attend a group of 130 children in kindergarten.

Mission Statement

St. Francis Kindergarten and Nursery is a Christian child-care service provided by St. Francis Catholic Church. Our mission is to provide each child with safe, loving care and training to develop Christian habits, character, and healthy self-esteem also with the best Christian caregivers and facility possible at an affordable price. To provide care that recognizes the needs of the child and the family.

PHILOSOPHY

At St. Francis Kindergarten and Nursery, we believe that young children need a secure and nurturing environment during their early years in order to grow into healthy, productive adults. Our center is committed to providing that environment—one that is safe, loving, and grounded in Christian values.

We strive to support families by creating a space where children can grow up in all areas of development: spiritual, mental, social, physical, and emotional. Through a Christian atmosphere, we help each child build moral and spiritual values while recognizing and nurturing their unique individuality.

Our Values

Our values consist of the following, but are not limited to:

- Quality – We believe every child deserves excellence in early learning programs and services to make a difference in their lives and our community.
- Inclusion – All students will be included in our learning environment, regardless of age, race, gender, or learning level. St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery welcomes all children with open arms and love in our hearts.
- Respect – Respect is essential in building long-lasting relationships with our students and their families. This key component helps us to optimize and highlight the talents and diversity we bring into the facility as partners in the children’s growth and development.
- Accountability – We strive to provide open communication with all partners in our business. This allows us to be transparent, open, and honest with one another, and in turn, provides the best environment for our students at home and at the facility.
- Teamwork – The combined action of the educators and the families working together provides an effective and efficient working relationship. By acting together as a team, we can provide the best care for our little ones!

Our Goals

St. Francis Kindergarten goals provide us a path to desirable outcomes for our students. These goals provide direction and motivation for the quality of care and education we provide.

- To provide a wide variety of developmentally appropriate practices, that children not only learn and develop but also enjoy.
- To provide a flexible, calm, and nurturing environment where affection is given freely and from the heart.
- To set clear expectations for all students and encourage their independence.
- To meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of our students.
- To provide an atmosphere of respect for self and one another.
- To provide opportunities for cooperative play.
- To create a happy, warm, and exciting environment that is inviting, comfortable, and manageable for the children.
- To support a caring staff who show genuine respect, love, and encouragement for the children.
- To offer individual guidance to children based upon careful observation of each child’s needs and in keeping with parent/guardian direction.
- To ensure the safety and welfare of all children.

A Look into Our Program

What We Do and What We Believe

St. Francis Kindergarten and Nursery is a licensed center and childcare program with a capacity of 150 children from 18 months to 5 years old. St Francis Kindergarten is nonprofit childcare program providing services in Waco, Texas since 1962. To continue to have a quality childcare with affordable prices, St. Francis depends on fundraising events. We need your cooperation and donations for these events. Please let us know if you are interested in joining our fundraising committee.

Description of Age Groups by Classes

Babies - Ladybugs and Turtles

This age group begins at 18 months to 24 months old.

In our baby's classroom, we have a daily flow that your little one is sure to love. No matter their individual needs, we come together as a team to ensure that every baby is nurtured, cuddled, and adored throughout the day. We love spending time together for story time, prayers, outside walks, and learning circles. Our little explorers also indulge in sensory exploration and creative art, encouraging their natural curiosity and creativity. And, of course, we cannot forget about the music and beautiful stories we share! Our weekly themes are always exciting and engaging, allowing your baby to learn about colors, shapes, animals, and people. We are here for your little ones whenever they need us, and we look forward to sharing all these wonderful experiences with them!

Toddlers - Butterflies

This age group begins at 24 months to 30 months old.

Welcome to our Toddler Classroom! Our little ones are always on the go, eager to explore and learn through their senses. We provide a daily schedule that includes group time, prayers, outdoor play, meals and snacks, nap time, and the most exciting part of the day - playtime! Our group time is filled with age-appropriate books and discussions about our day and feelings. We embrace nature during outdoor playtime and enjoy the beauty around us. Our weekly themes encourage the exploration of homes, families, pets, and animals. We love to sing and play, filling our room with warm energy and positivity. Come join us in our bright and welcoming classroom, where learning is fun and stimulating for our little ones.

Older Toddlers- Monkeys

This age group begins at 30 months to 3 years old.

At our center, we see our older toddlers as little explorers. We believe that every little thing around them can be a source of excitement and learning. From dancing to counting numbers, recognizing letters, and praying, we inspire our toddlers to explore and engage with the world around them. Socialization is key in this age group as we encourage sharing, using manners, and taking turns. We have fun singing songs that teach us about the day, month, and year. Little hands enjoying art projects and having the freedom to create something new with an abundance of materials; also, praying every day is a top priority for us and fills our hearts with joy.

Science projects are always a hit with our little ones, too. Watching their eyes fill with surprise when they see a new discovery is what makes it all worth it. And of course, we never miss a chance to enjoy the outdoors and play. We're here to nurture, inspire, and create lifelong learners.

Preschool –Giraffe - Tigers

This age group starts at 3 years old and prepares the students for Pre-K.

Understands size differences (such as big and little), past tense (yesterday), long sentences, and prepositions (on, under, behind) are some of the concepts that 3-year-olds will learn. We also have fun singing songs that teach us about the days, months, and years. Little hands enjoying art projects and having the freedom to create something new with an abundance of materials fills our hearts with joy. Prayer time is a top priority for us.

Pre-K 3- Lions

This age group starts at 3 years old to young 4-year-olds.

We know that learning at the age of 3 is critical for brain growth; structured learning helps build strong foundations. Introduction to Basic Concepts: Numbers, letters, colors, and shapes are introduced in a fun, age-appropriate manner. Problem-solving skills: Activities promote curiosity, exploration, and early critical thinking. Language and Communication Skills, Vocabulary growth: Kids are exposed to rich language through stories, songs, and teacher interactions.

PreK- Dinosaurs

This age group starts at 4 years old and prepares the students for kindergarten.

Welcome to the exciting world of social-emotional growth! Here in this age group, we believe that every child is a unique and beautiful individual. We focus on exploring who we are and how to work together to achieve objectives both individually and as a team. Writing our names, learning to read, and exploring phonics are just some of the wonderful things we enjoy in our daily classes. But that is not all. We love to dive into extreme science projects that make us say “WOW!” and our sensory bin helps enhance the learning theme we are studying that week. Additionally, we frequently host guest speakers and enjoy exploring the community to enrich our learning. Getting outside to move our bodies and strengthen our fine and gross motor muscles is something that we love, and praying every day is a top priority for us. This age group is ideally suited for the next grade, which is Kindergarten. Rest assured that your little ones are well on their way to a successful journey into adulthood.

Inclusive Care Policy

At St. Francis Kindergarten and Nursery, we are committed to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all children and families. We believe that every child is a unique gift from God and deserves to be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect.

We welcome children of all backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and family structures. Our program is designed to meet the diverse developmental needs of all children, including those with disabilities or special needs. We work in partnerships with families and, when appropriate, with specialists to ensure that each child receives the support they need to thrive.

Our inclusive approach means:

We respect and celebrate differences in culture, language, learning styles, and abilities.

We make reasonable accommodations to support the full participation of every child.

We train our staff to recognize and respond to individual needs with sensitivity and care.

We promote kindness, empathy, and acceptance among all children and staff.

We are dedicated to fostering a community where every child feels valued, safe, and included. If your child requires any specific accommodation or support, we encourage you to speak with the director so we can work together to create the best experience for your child.

Our Curriculum

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

At St. Francis Kindergarten, we provide our students with a developmentally appropriate curriculum named FUNNYDAFFER that is based on TEXAS standards. NAEYC, which is the National Association for the Education of Young Children, defines developmentally appropriate curriculum as methods that promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning. We believe this to be the heart of our curriculum. Our weekly lesson plans are developed through our students' interests and what grabs their attention. We do our best to meet

every child's individual cognitive and developmental level and encourage and inspire them to progress. Our PreK Program focuses on total development and readiness for kindergarten. St. Francis also provides an exciting way for students to learn more about God and how to grow in their relationship with Him.

HOURS AND MONTHS OF OPERATION

Monday through Friday 6:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.

Months of Operations: August to July

The center closes for the last week in July and the first week in August.

Admissions

Enrollment Requirements

To enroll your child at St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery, your child must be between the ages of 18 months and 5 years old.

Registration Documents

The following forms must be completed to reserve your child's spot at St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery

- *Enrollment Application*
- *Enrollment and childcare food program forms are completed.*
- *A physician signs an immunization and physical statement.*
- *An enrollment fee is paid. THE FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE.*
- *Parent(s) given St. Francis Handbook. Parent(s) read the entire handbook, sign and return "Letters of Agreement."*
- *Parents attend orientation day.*

Immunizations Requirements

- *The Health Department requires that we have a record of immunization for each child.*
- *Immunization may be through your physician or local health department authorities.*
- *The law requires that no child be admitted to the childcare center until immunization is completed.*
 - a) *Polio*
 - b) *DPT/TD*
 - c) *Measles (rubella and rubeola)*
 - d) *Mumps*
 - e) *HIB*
 - f) *TB*

- *A child's immunization record must be current and complete.*
- *Inform the childcare Director each time your child's shots are updated. If they are delayed because of illness or the doctor will not give them at that time, we must have a doctor's note stating when the shots will be given.*

Enrollment Fees

- \$100 registration fee
- \$ 50 supplies fee
- \$550 tuition fee for potty-trained
- \$650 tuition for no potty-trained children

Special Discounts

- \$25 off sibling discount
- \$25 off military discounts.
- \$25 off active members of St. Francis Church

Sibling Enrollment Program

St. Francis Kindergarten requires an advanced notice of three months for the placement of a sibling into our program. Siblings are given priority in the facility, but are not guaranteed a spot. Families receive a \$25 discount on the sibling's monthly tuition.

Waitlist Information

To join the St. Francis Kindergarten waitlist, parents/guardians must complete a waitlist application online.

This application will be good for 3 months. After that period, you need to reapply.

Items To Bring on Your Child's First Day

Your child must have the following items on their first day of school:

- Closed-toed indoor shoes.
- Proper outdoor wear
- A thin four-fold section mat
- An extra set of clothes brought in a Ziplock bag.
- A blanket for nap time, and a soft toy if desired, for nap time
- Diaper and wipes if required.

Updating Forms for Your Child's File

St. Francis Kindergarten requires all parents or guardians of enrolled students to keep their child's forms up to date with their current medical and emergency information. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that all facility forms are up to date. The administration has the right not to allow the student into the facility if any forms are missing from their file after two notices from the administration.

Payment Policies

Monthly Tuition Fee

- *A non-refundable registration fee is paid at the time of registration.*
- *All childcare fees are due by the 1st of the month for the current month.*
- *We have the right to dismiss anyone if the tuition is not paid in full by the 15th of the month.*

Late Payment Fee

A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged if **the fee** is not paid by the 10th of the month. If payment is not made by the 15th of the month, your child will become inactive on the following business day and will incur a \$25 reinstatement fee. The Reinstatement fee must be paid before the child is made active. Names will be posted on the door as a reminder to pay your tuition and fees. •

We have the right to dismiss anyone if the tuition is not paid in full by the 15 day of the month.

Returned Payments

A \$35.00 fee will be charged for every returned check, when you pick up your returned check. After two returned checks we will only accept cash payment.

Evaluation Of Tuition Rates

All families will be notified of any changes in tuition rates at least 1 months prior to when they will become effective. By notifying our families well ahead of time, we help prepare them for the changes in pricing, and with the necessary time to contact administration with any questions.

Payment Processing Fees

To ensure we continue offering high-quality care without raising tuition rates, St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery will begin passing payment processing fees directly to families, effective August 1st, 2025,

Processing Fees Applied by Payment Type:

Credit Card Payments: A 2.95% service fee will apply.

ACH/Bank Draft Payments: A 0.6% service fee will apply (with a minimum of \$0.25 and a maximum of \$2.00). These fees are charged by our third-party payment processor and are not retained by the school.

Recommendation:

To minimize transaction fees, families are encouraged to use the ACH/Bank Draft method, which carries a significantly lower service charge than credit card transactions.

If you need assistance updating your payment method, please contact the administrative office. Thank you for your continued support and partnership in keeping tuition affordable.

St. Francis does not offer tuition refunds or make-up days. There is no deduction for absences, late entries, or national holidays.

Vacations

Families who choose to take vacation during any time of the school year must pay 100 % of the child's tuition to reserve their current spot.

Late Pick-Up Fee

At 5:31 PM \$ 25 will be charged; be ready to pay the amount when you pick up your child.

Holidays

St. Francis Kindergarten is closed for the following holidays.

- *New Year's Day*
- *MLK*
- *Holy Thursday, Good Friday*
- *Memorial Day*
- *Juneteenth*
- *Fourth of July*
- *Labor Day*
- *Thanksgiving Day-Friday after*
- *Christmas Vacations*

3 In-Service Days for teachers to obtain their requirements by the State 24 clock hours of training plus CPR and FIRST AID. One in October, March, and May. (Please check these days in the school calendar).

Early Dismissal Days

PICK UP AT 2:00pm Christmas and End of the year program. So that our teachers can prepare.

Weather Policy

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery may close due to harsh weather conditions. No discounts will be given for closures caused by unpredictable weather. The administration of the facility will monitor local news to address when the facility must close early or cancel operations for that day, and the parents will be notified through Brightwell, Facebook, or a direct phone call. We follow the Public School Schedule.

Withdrawal And Discharge Policy

Withdrawing From the Center

If you wish to withdraw your child from St. Francis, a 30-day written notice is required. If you fail to provide a 30-day notice, you will have to pay the tuition for the following month.

Discharge Policy

St Francis Kindergarten has the right to terminate a child's enrollment under specific circumstances. This includes any child who, after numerous attempts from staff to remedy the behavior, does not progress in their behavior and whose behavior is negatively impacting other children's experience. This also includes any child whose needs cannot be met by the Facility's philosophies and resources. Many attempts will be made to help the child thrive in our environment. This includes observational notes, therapy referrals, and tactics to be used at home and onsite at the facility.

The following measures will occur before the dismissal of a student from the Facility:

- The teacher will document the student's behavior by providing detailed notes of the incident, including dates and insights into why the incident occurred.
- The director, parents/guardians, and teachers will meet to discuss any behavior concerns.
- A behavior plan for the child will be created and agreed on by all parties, including staff, parents/guardians, and administration. Behavior therapists and consultants may be used to support the staff when working with the child.
- Staff and parents/guardians will have frequent communication to evaluate the success of the behavior plan.

Once these efforts have been made and resources have been exhausted, parents/guardians and the director will meet to determine the next course of action. The facility and its staff reserve the right to determine any disputed factual matters regarding termination of enrollment.

Arrival And Departure

Arrival Procedure

Upon arriving at the facility, parents must pull up at the designated pick-up and drop-off spot in front of the building. Parents must walk their children to the front door, be ready to sign the child in. A reliable person must bring the child and be at least 18 years old, we do not accept children with a person under 18 years old.

Drop-off time is between 6:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. at the front door and from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM at the cafeteria.

The person who brings him/her must stay until the child has been checked into the childcare center.

The child must be signed in and must be left with a staff member.

*It is your responsibility to sign your child in. **We will not be accepting children if they are not signed in through Brightwell.** We will contact you to come and pick up your child as soon as we see that your child is not signed in. No children will be accepted after 9:30 AM unless you have a doctor's excuse.*

Departure Procedure

The allocated pick-up time is from 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. If you plan to pick up your child earlier, please notify the administration so we can have your child ready. Upon picking up your child, you are responsible for signing out.

If parents are divorced or separated and one parent is NOT allowed to see or pick up the child, the childcare center must have a certified copy of the court order or final judgment on file.

Pick-Up Authorization

For the child's safety, the only people authorized to pick up a child are those listed by the parent/guardian on the child's approved pick-up list. If a child is to be released to anyone other than the person(s) listed, a written note authorizing pick-up must be received prior to pick-up time.

Pick-Up Authorization Process

- The "Authorized Pick-Up Person" **must be at least 18 years old** and may be asked to provide a photo ID to the staff.
- This authorization shall remain in force until it is edited or rescinded in writing by the signer of this authorization.

General Employee Information

Staffing At St. Francis

St. Francis Kindergarten always provides enough staff for the capacity of each classroom. This means that the student-to-teacher ratios are always followed. A detailed staffing plan is maintained and kept in the office.

What Makes Our Staff Special?

Our staff can demonstrate the skill and competence necessary to contribute to each child's physical, intellectual, personal, emotional, and social development. Factors that contribute to the attainment of this standard include:

- Emotional maturity when working with children.
- Cooperation with the purposes and services of the program
- Respect for children and adults
- Flexibility, understanding, and patience.
- Physical and mental health that do not interfere with childcare responsibilities.
- Good personal hygiene
- Frequent interaction with children
- Listening skills, availability, and responsiveness to children
- Sensitivity to children's socioeconomic, cultural, ethnic, religious backgrounds, and individual needs and capabilities
- Use of positive discipline and guidance techniques
- The ability to provide an environment where children can feel comfortable, relaxed, happy, and are able to be involved in playtime, recreation, and other activities.
- Overall passion and drive

General Employee Classifications

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery has the following employees on staff to ensure proper supervision and a safe learning environment for children.

- **Director:** The childcare director is responsible for the planning and supervision of the program and activities of the children, orientation to newly employed staff, on-site supervision of all staff, and in-service training. The Director oversees all program elements and handles all business concerning the city and state, licenses, and regulations.
- **Business Manager:** The childcare business Manager manages the business finances, tuition, late payments, discounts, payroll, and human resources.
- **Lead Teacher:** A lead teacher is responsible for the academic, social-emotional growth, and development of children in their care. The focus for our lead teachers is to create a safe environment for the children, to work with parents, administrators, and other teachers to improve students'

experience, and to meet teaching goals. Additionally, lead teachers plan, evaluate, and improve the classroom's physical environment to create opportunities that meet the changing needs of their students.

- **Floater and Substitutes:** The floater/substitute position supports all teachers in the classroom. This person must have all the same qualifications as an assistant teacher and have the correct paperwork on file.

Background checks

All St. Francis Kindergarten employees will be screened by the appropriate law enforcement agency using the Texas Health and Human Services background system.

VACCINES

Employees at the center are not required to get vaccines AT THIS TIME

Yummy, It Is Time to Eat!

Preparation Of Food

Olivia Contreras, Irma Cadena and Nathaly Contreras

These people hold a valid food-handler certificate as the state requires.

Mealtimes

Meals are served at:

Breakfast - 8 am.

Lunch - 11:00 am.

Snack - 2:30 pm.

Menus

All food menus are posted in the kitchen, walkway entry, classrooms, and office.

We will provide milk for the students for breakfast and lunch. Drinking water is always available to all children.

Children With Special Diets

If a student has an allergy or dietary restrictions, please inform the facility immediately.

Parents/guardians must notify the administration in writing; this information will be kept in the child's file. This information is also posted in the classroom and kitchen for all to be aware of. Parents will be asked to complete a Food Allergy Information form.

Meals Provided by Parent/Guardian

St. Francis will not provide the food needed for a special diet; meals need to be provided by the parents. The parents and the administration must agree upon this. Perishable food will be refrigerated upon arrival. Special foods provided by parents must be clearly labeled with the

child's name, date, and identity of the food, and will not be shared with other children. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure the student has food at the facility every day.

Facility Celebrations

St Francis loves to celebrate with your little one during special occasions! Parents/guardians must notify the administration or the classroom lead teacher at least one week prior to the celebration to discuss the facility's food restrictions and policies regarding the bringing in of outside treats and snacks.

General Facility Policies

Type Of Insurance

Texas Mutual Insurance Company

Commercial General Liability

State Regulations and Licensing

All St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery employees must be knowledgeable of the state's childcare licensing rules and regulations. A copy of the state and local guidelines is always kept in the facility, and each employee receives a copy upon hire.

Parents contacting HHSC

The center is licensed through HHSC. A copy of the State Minimum Standards and our most recent inspection report are always available for parents to view at the center. You can also obtain the same information by visiting www.hhsc.org

Smoking Policy

Marijuana, cigarettes, and other smokeless tobacco products are not allowed at St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery. Parents/guardians who smoke are strongly encouraged not to do so before picking up their child from the facility, as smoke stays on clothing and hair for some time. All parents and guardians must wash their hands after smoking before arriving at the facility.

Alcohol Policy

If at any time we feel that a parent, guardian, or anyone authorized to pick up or drop off the child is under the influence of alcohol and or any other toxic substance, the facility will contact another authorized person to come and pick up the child, explaining the circumstances. In some cases, an incident of this nature could lead to a referral to our governing bodies and a call to social services.

Parent involvement

Parents are welcome to visit. A good parent-teacher relationship is in the best interest of your child; therefore, the director and/or teacher will be available for conferences at your request.

Parents are given a tour of the childcare center at the time of enrollment.

Parents are invited to participate in program-related activities, including but not limited to birthdays, holiday parties, or other special occasions. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend all MONTHLY events, special occasions, parent meetings, support groups or other program-related activities.

We encourage parents to be part of our fundraising committee. Please let us know if you are interested in participating. We are also requesting two hours of volunteer time per year, Please ask the administration when you can do your hours.

MOTHER BREAST-FEEDING

Although we do not have infants in our care, we can provide a mother with a place to sit and breast feed her child. She may be offered a classroom that is not occupied at that time; if needed, she will be given a pillow and/or clean towels to make her and the baby more comfortable.

Communication

The program has systems in place for communication between the facility and parents, which may include Brightwell messages, phone calls, parent-teacher conferences.

*Our teachers must be always supervising the children, please make morning conversation quick if it does not pertain to a specific need regarding your child and the same when picking up. All important information will be sent **through Brightwell**, they may be personally contacted by the director and/or teacher of the child if any matters need to be clarified about their child.*

We understand that being away from your children is hard, so we try to send pictures of the daily activities.

*We also make posts **on Facebook** to make you smile when you see your children's faces.*

*A monthly **newsletter** is written to the parents every month to inform them of events and news pertaining to school activities. IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT THE DIRECTOR IMMEDIATELY, PLEASE SEND EMAIL TO: stfrancis.kdirector@gmail.com or stfranciscwaco@gmail.com*

Non-Discrimination Policy

At St. Francis Kindergarten, we value all employees and job candidates as unique individuals, and we welcome the variety of experiences they bring to our company. As such, we have a strict non-discrimination policy. We believe everyone should be treated equally regardless of race, sex, gender identification, sexual orientation, national origin, native language, religion, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, pregnancy, or other characteristics protected by law. If you feel that you have been discriminated against, please let the administration know immediately. Every complaint will be appropriately investigated.

** SHRM Better Workplace Better World*

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, “sexual harassment” is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual’s body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling, or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

St. Francis encourages reporting all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation regardless of the offender’s identity or position. Individuals who believe that they have been the victim of such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, any member of the personnel practices committee, human resources, or any ombudsman. See the complaint procedure described below.

** SHRM Better Workplace Better World*

ABUSE, NEGLECT, EXPLOITATION

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery has a strict, zero tolerance policy concerning the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of any person, but especially a child.

St. Francis staff adheres to state law TFC261.101(b) which states that a teacher and/or professional must report within 48 hours of suspecting the child has been abused or neglected. A teacher and/or professional cannot delegate this duty to another person but must report the suspected abuse or neglect him or herself.

St. Francis proactively seeks to prevent mental, emotional, physical, and/or sexual injury and/or abuse of children, persons 65 years or older, and adults with disabilities.

If St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery staff recognize symptoms of mental, emotional physical, and/or sexual injury and/or abuse of children, persons 65 years or older or adults with disabilities then the staff member who suspects such circumstances will report his/her suspicions to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services immediately and no later than 48 hours.

Definitions:

Abuse - mental, emotional physical, or sexual injury to a child or person 65 years or older, or an adult with disabilities, or failure to prevent such injury.

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

of a person 65 year or older with disabilities: results in starvation, dehydration, over or under medication, unsanitary living conditions, and lack of heat, running water, electricity, medical care, and personal hygiene.

Exploitation - misusing the resources of a person 65 years or older or an adult with disabilities for personal or monetary benefit. This includes checks, abusing a joint checking account, and taking property and other resources.

Call the Texas Abuse Hotline at 800-252-5400 or make a report online through their secure website.

<https://www.txabusehotline.org/>

Social Media

Social media includes online electronic tools to help students, parents, teachers, and staff communicate effectively. Specific examples of popular social media tools include Instagram, Facebook, and other communication apps.

Upon enrolling a child into the center, all parents who are guardians must complete the social media consent form. This form is used as approval for allowing a parent or guardian's child to be seen on our social media platforms.

Confidentiality

Childcare programs maintain confidentiality on a "need-to-know" basis. This information is shared only when it is necessary. This is important, especially when there are specific health and safety concerns. State and Local Laws prohibit the sharing of information about children or employees without written approval from the parent, guardian, or individual.

Hazardous Items

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery has clear guidelines on identifying, using, and storing dangerous products, plants, and objects. This policy aims to protect employees, children, families, and visitors from the risks associated with chemical products, medicines, other dangerous substances, and dangerous equipment used in the facility's outdoor and indoor environments.

Toy Policy:

We kindly ask that all personal toys be kept at home unless your child's teacher specifically requests otherwise. An exception to this rule is made for transitional objects—such as a special blanket or stuffed animal—that provide comfort to young children as they adjust to being away from their parents. These items can be helpful during the separation process and are welcome in the classroom under the following condition: all transitional items must be washed daily and brought to the facility clean.

Biting

Biting is a behavior that is often unexpected and can harm and frighten others. Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. Most times, it is a temporary behavior and one that is seen between the ages of 11 months and 24 months. Toddlers bite others for many different reasons. A child might be teething, feel tired, angry, frustrated, or even bite when they are overly happy and excited. Biting may also be a way for a child to get attention from other adults or friends. Toddlers do not have strong verbal skills, are impulsive, and lack strong self-control, and it is important to remember that they are developing these abilities at their own pace. Biting can also occur for no apparent reason, happen quickly, and be shocking to observe. Our primary concern at St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery is the safety and health of the children and our staff. We take all biting situations seriously and use our knowledge as educators to handle these tough situations in positive, constructive, and meaningful ways to stop them from occurring.

When it comes to a biting incident, our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve it immediately. The Facility will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will always maintain close and constant supervision of the children.

If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent. For every biting incident, two actions will occur:

1. Parents will be contacted by phone call or Brightwell.
2. An accident report will be completed and signed by the parent/guardian at pick-up for both the child who bit and the child who was bitten.

If the biting becomes excessive and the Facility's techniques have been exhausted, St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery has the right to discharge the student. Please note, many measures will be taken prior to help the student prior to it getting to this point. These measures are outlined as follows:

Procedure employees will follow if biting occurs:

We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child who bites learn different, more appropriate behavior.

- For the child who was bitten:
 - First aid is given for the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
 - Parents are notified by a phone call. If a parent cannot be reached, an email will be sent, and an additional phone call will occur until the parents are reached directly.
 - An accident report form is filled out, documenting the incident.
 - Parents/guardians will sign the form at pickup.
 - This form is stored in the child's file. Parents or guardians can receive a copy of the form if requested.
- For the child who bit:

- The teacher will firmly tell the child, “NO! DO NOT BITE!”
- The child will be brought to an area of the classroom where they can talk with the teacher.
- Parents are notified by a phone call. If a parent cannot be reached, an email will be sent, and an additional phone call will occur until the parents are reached directly.
- A behavior report form is filled out, documenting the incident.
- Parents/guardians will sign the form at pickup.
- This form is stored in the child’s file. Parents/Guardians can receive a copy of the form if asked.
- Procedure if biting continues:
 - The child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents. This includes the teacher always staying close to the child and holding the child’s hand in moments where there is free play, outside time, high-energy activities, or times when the child has chosen to bite in the past.
 - The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.)
 - The director and administrative staff will also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
 - The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.
 - The teachers will also support the learning of appropriate behaviors with books, short acceptable educational video clips, puppet shows, and modeling interactive games and activities.
- Procedure if biting becomes excessive:
 - If a child inflicts 3 bites in a one-week period, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child’s behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
 - An action plan will be created by the administration, the teachers, and the parents which will be followed immediately in the classroom. This action plan can consist of shadowing and mirror techniques, half-day exposure to the facility, or an agreed-upon disciplinary approach or one day suspension from the facility.
 - At the end of the one-week action plan, if the child has 2 incidents of biting, suspension, or discharge from the program will be decided by the administrator if they feel the behavior is disrupting the classroom, cannot be controlled, and is harming others.
 - Recommendations for therapy, possible alternative facilities, and other ideas will be provided to the parents.

Please note, St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery will do its best to integrate and teach appropriate behavior choices for children who bite or harm others, but in some situations, the environment may not be the best for this child, and the teachers may have exhausted all resources.

Diaper Changing

Proper diapering procedures are posted at each changing table. Changing tables are impervious, non-absorbent surfaces. The tables are sturdy and adult-height. The changing area is never located in food preparation areas and is never used for the temporary placement of food. Hand-washing sinks with liquid soap dispensers are within arm's length of each changing table. A closable, foot-pedal-operated, plastic-lined trash receptacle is used in every diaper changing area for contaminated diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and liners.

Diaper Changing Procedures

Parents must provide a sufficient supply of daily diapers and wipes.

- Teachers check diapers and pull-ups regularly and change soiled or wet diapers and clothing immediately. Universal precautions are always practiced.
- Teachers prepare the diapering area with diapers, disposable wipes, and disposable bags. A nonabsorbent changing surface is covered with nonabsorbent paper liners, large enough to cover the surface from the child's shoulders to beyond the child's feet.
- The staff wear disposable exam gloves when changing diapers, and gloves are changed between each child.
- Minimal contact is made with the child's soiled clothes and diaper.
- While safety straps on changing tables are not used (to avoid contamination), staff members always have one hand on the child during a diaper change.
- The staff is trained in and follows proper procedures for cleaning a child's genital area.
- Used diapers and wipes are disposed of in a plastic bag. If necessary, soiled clothes are placed in a plastic bag to be sent home to parents. A clean diaper is placed on the child.
- During diaper change, caregivers talk with and relate warmly to children.
- The child is carefully removed from the changing table. The child's hands are washed at a sink with soap and running water. The changing paper liner is disposed of, and the changing table is disinfected after each use.
- The staff member washes his or her hands after each diaper change with soap and water for 20 seconds and uses a paper towel to turn off the faucet.
- The Stand-Up Method for diapering is used in some classrooms. These procedures are posted in classrooms where this method is used.
 - For urine-soiled diapers, the child stands on a non-absorbent paper liner. For a bowel movement-soiled diaper, the child will lie down on a diaper changing pad covered with a non-absorbent paper liner. In each case, the child is diapered within arms-length of a hand washing sink.

Transitioning A Student to The Next Age Group

Students will transition to the next age group when they are age-appropriate, there is space available, and all parties, including parents, teachers, and administration, agree it is the right time for the child. We transition our students to the next age group in chronological age to make it fair for everyone.

St. Francis Kindergarten's transitioning schedule is based on how the students react to the new environment. On the first day, one of the students' current teachers will walk the student over to explore their new classroom, see their new friends, and meet their new teachers. On the second day, the student

will be walked to the next classroom by the same teacher but will have more time to explore independently. If the child does well, the teacher will observe and allow more time in their new classroom. If we see the child is having a hard time, they will be taken back to their current classroom and discuss how exciting it was in their new classroom. The next day, the teacher will walk the student over again to see any progress. This will continue until the child is in a place where their current teacher is no longer needed by their side in their new classroom, and they feel comfortable and positive!

Parents will be notified of their children's progress with detailed messages through the facility's app. We believe that slow and steady wins this race, and positive energy from both the new and the old teacher will help the student feel comfortable and confident in this exciting new adventure!

Screens And Media

The use of visual media, such as television, films, and videotapes, should be limited to developmentally appropriate programming. Media may be used as a special event or to achieve a specific goal, but not as a regular daily routine. TV, video, internet, or DVD viewing shall not be allowed during meal or snack times.

The director must approve all videos, and all screen time must be related to educational programming developed by the center.

Attire For Children

Your child must wear clothing that is easy to manage and safe for the activities they will be participating in while at the facility. Dress your child in simple, comfortable clothing that is washable. Please remember in choosing their clothing that children paint, glue, and participate in large movements daily. Children must also be dressed appropriately for the weather. Children must wear comfortable, closed-toed shoes. No flip-flops are allowed for safety reasons.

Don't forget to include a change of clothing to be left in your child's backpack in case of emergency. All clothing items must be labeled with the child's name. The Facility is not responsible for any lost or damaged clothing items.

Special Events

St. Francis Kindergarten hosts special events throughout the year as an opportunity for our families to get together with our staff and have a wonderful time. You will be notified by Brightwell you also can check the school calendar. Please note alcohol and smoking are prohibited. Your participation in these events brings a feeling of connectedness and collaboration to our Facility!

Field Trips

St. Francis Kindergarten believes that field trips are a creative way to enrich a study and expand the learning environment. All field trips must be approved by the facility Director. Parents must be notified at least one week before the planned field trip and must fill out a permission slip to consent to their child's participation.

Lice Policy

If a student is found to have live head lice, we will notify their parent/guardian by phone and provide them with information on head lice when they pick up their child. The student must be picked up promptly, and they cannot return to the facility until 24 hours after they've used a medicated lice shampoo treatment. Only in certain cases will we check the student's head for lice when they return to school. Ultimately, it's the parent/guardian's responsibility to manage head lice by checking for live lice daily and before returning to school. Students found to have nits/eggs can still attend school, but we encourage parents/guardians to comb them out daily for 14 days and complete a follow-up treatment in 7-10 days. We do not support classroom screenings for head lice. We'll notify the custodian to vacuum affected classrooms and upholstered furniture, remove stuffed animals and pillows for 14 days, and keep coats, hats, scarves, and backpacks separate from each other.

Potty Training and Diaper Changing

Stages of Potty Training

St. Francis Kindergarten believes there are three steps to potty training or toilet learning. These stages are:

- First Stage: Interested in the Potty!
 - This stage occurs when the child communicates that they have gone potty in their diaper. They show interest in the potty by pointing, saying potty words, and being uncomfortable in their diaper. This is a great phase to start reading books about going potty and watching videos!
- Second Stage: Toilet Trained with Adult Support
 - This occurs when the child can use the toilet, but it is the adult who gets the child to the bathroom on a set schedule. In summary, the adult initiates the use of the toilet by the child. During this stage, the child is fully assisted by the adult. The adult walks the child to the toilet, sits them down, pulls up and down their pants, and helps with wiping. Accidents do frequently occur in this stage. This stage focuses on getting the child used to going to the bathroom, being aware of this new and exciting adventure, and assisting them to do it correctly!
- Third Stage: Potty Training
 - The student can use the toilet, mostly independently, and express the need to go potty on the toilet. They are communicating interest and acting. The child shows signs of readiness and feels independent to use the potty. Accidents occur very infrequently in this stage! They still may occur, so do not get discouraged.

Remember that all children potty train at their own speed.

The following guidelines must be followed when children are potty training/wearing underwear at the facility:

- No overalls, pants with a belt, pants that snap, or any clothing that is hard to get the child out of quickly.
- If possible, bring an extra pair of shoes as they can get wet too.
- ALWAYS have extra clothes and underwear on-site at the Facility.
- Inform the teacher if your child prefers to sit or stand when using the toilet.
- Keep a small supply of pull-ups for nap time at the Facility.

Your responsibility is to take home any soiled clothes to be cleaned and sanitized.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

*The container must be labeled with the child's name. The parents must have the item logged in at the front office. It will be kept in the locked cabinet in the child's classroom, and the teachers will use it as needed. The product will not be applied after its expiration date and will be either disposed of or returned to the parent. **You will be required to sign an authorization form in the enrollment package.***

Animal Handling and Policy

Introduction

Research shows that interacting with animals improves children's social skills by helping them learn responsibility, respect, and empathy. Having animals in this setting has also been proven to reduce stress while increasing motivation and engagement with learning. From time to time, this facility may allow pets in the building or on the premises. This policy details how the facility and its staff will handle interactions between children and pets.

Guidelines and Policies Regarding Animals

Types of animals allowed on the premises:

- Small animals are allowed when properly inoculated and seen by a veterinarian to verify they are free of diseases that are dangerous to human health.
- The following animals are not allowed on the premises: reptiles, amphibians, poultry, rodents, ferrets, and any animal deemed as wild or dangerous; venomous or toxin-producing spiders and insects; animals more likely to spread rabies, such as bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes, and coyotes; and stray animals.

First Aid

The facility is responsible for the immediate treatment of any child who sustains bites, scratches, or any injury from animals. If the injury is too severe for our staff to treat, emergency services may be

contacted. In either case, guardians will be notified of the circumstances and will also be advised to watch for signs of infection.

Risks

When animals are brought onto the premises, your child may be exposed to allergens. It is your responsibility to inform the facility if your child has allergies, asthma, or other health conditions that would be exacerbated by the presence of animals. We will keep animals away from these children, and we will also confine pets to a limited area to reduce contact between these children and the animals.

Interactions with animals run an inherent risk of injury from bites or scratches, whether intentional or unintentional. To curb this risk, we will teach the children how to treat animals respectfully and safely, and we will immediately remove children from the interaction if the child behaves in a way that provokes the animal or if the animal shows signs of aggression. Some animals may carry diseases such as salmonella or E. coli. To avoid contact with these diseases, animals will not be permitted at any time in food areas. We will also ensure proper hand-washing protocols for all adults and children, and we will clean and sanitize all areas where animals have been.

Emergency Situations

If staff believe an animal is becoming a threat, the animal will immediately be caged or detained by its owner or the supervising staff member, and all children will be separated from the animal. If the animal becomes uncontrollable, emergency services will be contacted, and everyone will evacuate the area.

Discipline Policy

St. Francis Kindergarten has made praise and positive reinforcement the backbone of our discipline policy. Many studies have proven that a positive approach to behavior management helps children develop critical thinking skills, self-discipline, and higher self-esteem. Our disciplinary methods are based on these findings and are used for the betterment of your child.

Positive Discipline Techniques

- ☐ *Use positive statements and affirmations when speaking to children.*
- ☐ *Use terms and phrases the children understand.*
- ☐ *Talk with children in a calm manner at a normal speaking volume.*
- ☐ *Explain and demonstrate which behaviors are unacceptable and why.*
- ☐ *Apply rules and consequences consistently.*
- ☐ *Model appropriate behavior.*
- ☐ *Praise and encourage the children for positive behaviors.*
- ☐ *Set up the classroom environment to prevent misbehavior.*
- ☐ *Redirect children to the appropriate activity or behavior, providing alternatives if needed.*
- ☐ *Allow children to make choices.*

- ☐ *Help children talk out problems and think of solutions.*
- ☐ *Reason with and set limits for children.*
- ☐ *Listen to children and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.*
- ☐ *Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts.*
- ☐ *Use stories, songs, games, etc., and discussions to work through common conflicts.*

Techniques We Avoid

- ☐ *Inflict any type of corporal punishment upon a child, including any physical force.*
- ☐ *Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child.*
- ☐ *Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child.*
- ☐ *Use food as a form of reward or punishment.*
- ☐ *Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment.*
- ☐ *Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs.*
- ☐ *Compare children to one another.*
- ☐ *Place children in a locked and/or dark room.*
- ☐ *Leave any child alone, unattended, or without adult supervision.*
- ☐ *Allow discipline of a child by other children.*
- ☐ *Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents/guardians, families, or ethnic groups.*

Serious And Habitual Behavior

When more serious or habitual misbehavior occurs, a conference will be scheduled with the teachers of the classroom and the student's parents/guardians. Observations, accident reports, and other important documentation relating to the events will be presented and used as evidence. We will work together to develop a Behavior Plan and determine the next steps.

Challenging Behavior Process

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery has found that repeated misbehavior can cause stress and disruption to the classroom. Consistent misbehavior also indicates that the student needs extra support to develop their social and emotional skills. If serious concerns arise, St. Francis will work with the student's parents/guardians and professionals who specialize in supporting children's social-emotional development.

Methods and procedures we use to help students with behavior concerns:

- **Safe or quiet space:** When a student disrupts the class, they will be encouraged and asked to go to a dedicated space in the classroom. In this space, the teacher will supply calming tools (i.e., calming sensory bottles, breathing technique tools, books, etc.) to help the child regain control of their emotions and display appropriate behaviors. The teacher's role is to talk with the student about their behavior after they have calmed down and to show them that they are there to support and

to give love and care while the child experiences these emotions. After this discussion has occurred and the student is calm, the student will rejoin the classroom.

- **Walk or change of environment:** If a student's misbehavior continues, they will be encouraged to join a teacher on a walk or participate in an activity that helps the child's mood and encourages positive behavior.
- **Office Visit:** If the disruptive behavior continues, a visit to the office to see the administrative team will occur. The director will decide the next course of action based on the student's state at that time.
- **Notifying Parents/Guardians:** Parents/guardians will always be made aware of the student's day through the daily reports. If there was a time when the student had an emotional outburst or there were moments when the staff could not calm the student, the director may decide the student needs other support and/or a discussion with their parents/guardians at home. The teacher will then call to notify the parents/guardians and provide as much detail as possible.

If further support is needed, actions will be taken that are specific to the child's needs. These actions will be implemented quickly and consistently, and they will be age-appropriate and at the child's level of understanding.

If the behavior continues to be disruptive to the classroom, constitutes an immediate danger to the child, staff, or other students, or is considered uncontrollable and the facility's techniques for behavior management have been exhausted, the following will occur:

- The student's parents/guardians, teachers, and facility administration will attend a meeting to discuss what the facility needs to help the child and the steps that the parents/guardians must take to support the child and the facility.
- With the facility's support, the parents/guardians will call special education services in the local area. (If a child's behavior is such that it necessitates temporary removal on a repeated basis, there should be sufficient documentation for consideration of special education services.)
- Staff will document the outcomes of the incident, the subsequent conference, and the plan developed, including appropriate intervention strategies. The purpose of the conference is to develop a plan jointly with the family and available resources to address specific behaviors that are disruptive and/or pose an imminent danger (recurring violence, behavior, or aggression).

If after 1 months of continuous outside support for the child, the facility does not see any progress in the child's behavior, the director may decide to discharge the child from the Facility.

Assessments, Observations, Evaluations

Assessments At ST. FRANCIS KINDERGARTEN & NURSERY

St. Francis reserves the right to conduct developmental assessments of children's growth and progress to determine appropriate placements and programming.

Professional Evaluations

St. Francis may ask parents to share professional evaluations when necessary to determine how best to meet their child's needs. This information helps us provide the best care possible for your child's unique growth and development.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

All four preschool-age children must have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems.

A copy must be kept on file at the center, or a signed statement from the parent that copy is on file at the school the child attends away from the center. The statement must be dated and include the name, address, and telephone number of the pre-K program or school.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- *A good parent-teacher relationship is in the best interest of your child; therefore, the director and/or teacher will be available for conferences at your request.*

REQUIREMENTS REGARDING GANG-FREE ZONES FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

According to the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of your child care center is a gang-free zone. Gang-related activity is strictly prohibited within 1,000 feet of the center. Criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity conducted within 1,000 feet of a child-care center are subject to harsher penalties under Texas law.

New Requirements Regarding Gang-Free Zones for Child Care Centers

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This new statute requires that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed child care centers. The following is a tip sheet to assist in complying with the new law. This information may be posted at your child care operation or copies may be provided to parents.

What is a gang-free zone? A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult Sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends?

The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. The local municipal or county engineer may produce and update maps for the purposes of prosecution. Parents may contact their local municipality or court house for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

What is the purpose of gang-free zones?

Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

What does this mean for my day care center?

A child care center must inform parents or guardians of children attending the center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

When do I have to comply with the new requirement?

The law is already in effect, so providers should begin sharing information regarding gang-free zones immediately. Licensing staff will offer technical assistance to facilitate compliance until rules are proposed and adopted, which is estimated to occur in March 2010. In the meantime, providers should update their operational policies and procedures to include providing the information mandated by this law to the parents or guardians of the children in care.

For further information please contact your licensing representative or your local licensing office.

Childcare Licensing/jr DFPS 8/31/2009

I have received a copy of the new requirements regarding Gang-Free Zone Information.

Child's Name _____

Parent's Signature_____ Date_____

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Consent Forms

Emergency consent forms are completed by the parents or guardians upon enrolling their child(ren) at the center. A copy of these forms is in every classroom and always available on the Facility app.

Emergency Handbook Onsite

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery has an emergency procedure handbook to define policies and protocols in emergencies. This handbook is reviewed often, and all staff will be trained on these policies upon hire.

Emergency Procedures

IMMEDIATE MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- The staff member who witnessed the emergency will remain with the injured child, call 911 if necessary, and inform the director immediately.
- The director or a staff member who is not with the child will call 911.
- When calling 9-11, we will provide the following information:
- Location of the school: 612 N 3rd St., Waco, TX.
- The child's name.
- A description of the incident
- All staff members are required to follow the instructions provided by the 9-11 operator.
- The director will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's file.

PROCEDURE FOR INJURY

If a child receives an injury while at the facility:

- Attend to the child and provide the proper first-aid treatment required.
- Notify the director or administration of the incident.
- When the student is safe and comfortable, complete proper documentation to report the injury to the school and the child's parents.
- The director will decide if a phone call to the parents is needed.
- The completed written report will be given to a legal guardian/parent at pickup time.
- The report includes information regarding the time and date of the injury, what happened, how it was treated, and the signature of the witnessing teacher.

- This pickup person must sign the form and return it to the staff member on site.
 - Place the completed report that was signed by the parent in the child's personal school file.

Immediate evacuation

If an immediate evacuation is necessary, St Francis School will do everything possible to ensure the safety of its students.

If we are notified by authorities that our building needs to be evacuated, we will walk the children over St. Francis Catholic Church Office.

If the entire campus is unsafe, we will promptly call parents and ask them to immediately pick up their child from school.

If we do not directly speak with parents, we will transport students with the best means possible while under police escort from Waco Police Department. We will transport students to Indian Springs Middle School at 500 N University Parks Dr, Waco, TX, 76701

Please know that your child's safety is our number one concern.

Fire

Fire drills will be practiced at random times of the day. The drills will occur once a month. Evacuation maps are posted throughout the facility and are easy to access during a drill so that all parties are prepared! It is important that all staff and students remain calm during any emergency drill!

- The director will inform the staff in advance that a drill will occur later in the week.
- The staff will talk to their students about the alarm as well as the rules and procedures to follow while evacuating the building.
- The director will sound the alarm, and the facility will perform the evacuation procedure.
- Children will proceed immediately to their designated outside facility meeting spot.
- If possible, one staff member should try to grab the attendance sheets, emergency contact list, and cell phones to carry with them.
- The staff will take attendance of the students and check off their attendance sheets or communication app.
- If safe, the director will quickly check hiding spaces in the facility for any lost children. They will also check for any sources of smoke or fire during a real emergency fire situation.
- The director will then meet the rest of the students and employees at the designated area outside the building. The director will review attendance by checking the sign-in and sign-out sheets, or other documentation for student attendance (the facility's communication app).
- The director will time the drill to see how long it takes to evacuate the building.
- The director will confirm with local law officials when it is safe to return to the building.
- The director will assist with children who may need support to return to the building.
- The director will complete the first drill log with the following information: date and time of the drill, number of students, number of teachers, and the length of time it took for the students and teachers to evacuate the building.
- Parents will be notified that a fire drill occurred on this day.

Tornado

Tornado drills will occur twice a year, most times during the spring and summer as tornados occur during the warmer months. Evacuation maps are posted throughout the facility and are kept easy to access. All St. Francis employees and students will be prepared for the drills, and review what happens during a drill often so that all are prepared! It is important that all staff and students remain calm during any emergency drill!

- The director will inform the staff in advance that a drill will occur later in the week.
- The staff will talk to their students about the alarm as well as the rules and procedures to follow while evacuating the building.
- The director will sound the alarm, and the facility will follow the shelter-in-place/lockdown procedure.
- Children will proceed immediately to the designated lockdown site/shelter-in-place spot.
- If possible, one staff member should try to grab the attendance sheets, emergency contact list, and cell phones to carry with them.
- Students will take the safety position by kneeling on their knees and elbows with their foreheads on the floor and covering their heads with their hands.
- The staff will take attendance of the students and check off their attendance sheets or communication app while helping students to take the proper safety position.
- If safe, the director will quickly check hiding spaces in the facility for any lost children.
- The director will meet at the shelter in the designated spot to review attendance by checking the sign-in and sign-out sheets, or other documentation for students' attendance (the facility's communication app).
- The director will time the drill to see how long it takes for the students to take shelter.
- The director will confirm when it is safe to leave the shelter in the designated spot.
- The director will assist children who may need support to enter back into the program's main area.
- The director will complete the first drill log with the following information: date and time of the drill, number of students, number of teachers, and the length of time it took for the students and teachers to evacuate the building.
- Parents will be notified that a drill occurred on this day.

Poison Procedure

- The Poison Control Center phone number will be posted on the list of emergency numbers on the telephone.
- Poison emergencies or requests for poison information will be made by contacting the Poison Control Center Hotline at 1-800-252-2022 first – unless the person who has been poisoned is unconscious, not breathing, having trouble breathing, or is having convulsions. If any of these conditions are present, we will call 9-1-1 first.
- Chemicals, medications, pesticides, paints, cleaning agents, and other potentially harmful substances will be stored in locked areas that are inaccessible to children.

Illness Policies

The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- a fever of 100 degrees or more
- If the student is lethargic, preventing him from the daily activities and participating comfortably in the center.
- If their care requires more private attention than what the providers can do while providing proper supervision.
- inflammation of the eyes (excessive redness, glassy or discharge)
- vomiting (2 episodes)
- diarrhea or loose stool that is not contained within the clothing (2 episodes)
- communicable disease as defined by the Department of Health Services/Center for Disease Control
- unknown rash
- excessive nasal discharge
- pain

If symptoms develop at the childcare center, the child will be isolated, and the parents will be notified to pick up the child as soon as possible. If your child is sent home due to illness, he cannot return to the facility until he has been free from symptoms for 24 hours without using a fever reducer. This allows your child time to recover and stop the spread of illness to other children and staff.

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining if your child is ready to return to the facility.

- Mood, appetite, behavior, and activity are again normal
- No fever for 24 hours without a fever reducer
- Antibiotics (have been used for a full 24 hours)
- Vomiting cleared for 24 hours
- Diarrhea cleared for 24 hours
- Frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge resolved
- Pain resolved

It is your responsibility to notify the facility if your child has a communicable disease or infestation such as measles, mumps, chickenpox, or head lice. A child may be readmitted without a statement from a physician only if the child has been absent for a period equal to the longest incubation period of the disease as specified by the Department of Health and Social Services. The local Health Department will immediately be notified of all infectious diseases, and a note will be posted in the parent information center when there has been exposure to a communicable illness in the center.

*Children returned to the center with signs of illness or communicable disease will be refused entry into the facility. **Please consult with the administration if you need additional information.***

Medication Policies

•The childcare center will not be responsible for administering any type of medication to any child
Communication Agreement Between Parents and Facility Regarding Medication

Parents/guardians can come to the center to administrate medication to their child at any time.

Always have plan B when it comes to your children's care, and they cannot attend childcare.

Physical Activity Policy

St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery recognizes the importance of physical activity for young children.

Implementation of appropriate physical activity practices supports the health and development of children in care, as well as assists in establishing positive lifestyle habits for the future.

Physical Activity in Childcare

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in care are supported and encouraged to engage in active play, develop fundamental movement skills and to have limited screen time. Our center encourages all children to participate in a variety of daily physical activity opportunities that are appropriate for their age, that are fun and that offer variety.

To promote physical activity and provide all children with numerous opportunities for physical activity throughout the day, St. Francis will:

Daily Outdoor Play

Encourage a least restrictive, safe environment for infants and toddlers at all times.

Provide a designated safe outdoor area for infants (ages 0-12 months) for daily outdoor play.

Provide toddlers (ages 1 through 2 years) with at least 60-90 minutes of daily outdoor active play opportunities across 2 or 3 separate occasions.

Provide preschoolers and school-age children (ages 3 through 12 year old) with at least 90 – 120 minutes of daily outdoor active play opportunities across 2 or 3 separate occasions.

Increase indoor active playtime so the total amount of active playtime remains the same if the weather limits outdoor time.

Provide a variety of play materials (both indoors and outdoors) that promote physical activity.

Role of Staff in Physical Activity

Children will be encouraged to be physically active indoors and outdoors at appropriate times.

Will provide 5 – 10 minutes of planned physical activities at least 2 times daily for children aged 3 and older.

Screen Time Limitations

Not permit screen time (e.g., television, movies, video games and computers) for infants and children two years and younger.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Staff members do not withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., not being permitted to play with the rest of the class or being kept from play time), except when a child's behavior is dangerous to himself or others. Staff members never use physical activity or exercise as punishment, e.g., doing push-ups or running laps/ Play time or other opportunities for physical activity are never withheld to enforce the completion of learning activities or academic work. Our center uses appropriate alternate strategies as consequences for negative or undesirable behaviors, such as:

- Redirect the child to alternative situations.
- Make Changes to the learning environment by redesigning or enriching it.
- Help the child see alternatives, make decisions, and develop problem-solving skills
- Teach, model, and encourage appropriate behavior.
- Create simple and reasonable rules and work with other staff members to ensure consistency.
- Create logical consequences.

Appropriate Dress for Physical Activity

St. Francis Kindergarten, we have a Ready to Play Policy! Please bring your child ready to play and have fun each day. Your child will participate in both indoor lay and outdoor play. Therefore, play clothes and shoes which can get dirty and allow for free and safe movement are most appropriate. We expect parents to provide children with appropriate clothing for safe and active outdoor play during all seasons.

For safety, children cannot wear open-toe shoes, sandals or flip-flops. In winter, provide a warm jacket, hat, and mittens. In spring and fall, provide a jacket or sweater, and boots and rain jacket on rainy days. In summer, provide light clothing, swimsuit, towel, hat, and sunscreen. Please label all clothing with your child's name.

It is our expectation that children will go outside EVERYDAY! If you feel your child is too sick to go outside, then he/she is too sick to be at the child care center. We request that you keep him/her at home until they are well enough to go outside.

I have reviewed the information and understand the Physical Activity Policy

_____	_____	_____
Parent/ Guardian Printed Name	Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Director's Printed Name	Director Signature	Date

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

Today's Date: _____

- We _____ the parents of _____ have received a copy of the St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery Parent Handbook.
- I agree and understand the policies and procedures listed in this handbook and comply with the Facility's rules and regulations.
- I understand that the policies and procedures listed in this handbook are subject to change to reflect the program's needs.
- I understand I will be made aware of these changes in a timely fashion, and I will always adhere to the most up-to-date handbook.
- I attended the orientation conducted by St. Francis Kindergarten & Nursery on this date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date