

Central Texas Children's Academy  
2024-2025 Parent Handbook/Operational Policies



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At Central Texas Children's Academy, we believe that children experience the greatest growth, when they have consistency and feel secure and loved. We believe that each child is an individual, and as educators, we value and develop each child's individual strengths, interests, skills, abilities and knowledge to enhance their learning opportunities and growth. We provide a warm, caring, and safe environment for all children. We establish routines that are predictable and consistent. All children are treated with gentleness, honesty and respect, and we encourage them to treat others in this manner. Our classrooms cultivate an unbiased atmosphere where children are encouraged to challenge their individual selves and see society through a lens that celebrates diversity of thought and culture. The goal of Central Texas Children's Academy is to make this ongoing learning experience safe, positive, fun, and nurturing, as we strive to guide them into the next stage of development, with confidence in themselves and an excitement for continued learning. We offer childcare for Infants, Toddlers, PreK and School age children.

**Provided accommodations:** We support families and children who may need additional accommodations, to include home language, special needs/differing abilities, and cultural backgrounds. We do work with each family on an individual basis in order for us to make your time with Central Texas Children's Academy a great experience for you and your child. We offer prescheduled onsite therapy visits when needed. And upon request we are able to provide literature in English and Spanish as well. We do not discriminate against children, parents or coworkers, for any reason. This includes but is not limited to race, color of skin, religion, creed, gender, disability, military status, or national origin. All are welcomed at Central Texas Children's Academy.

**Curriculum:** We at Central Texas Children's Academy use Frog Street curriculum for children ages infant through pre k. Frog Street's comprehensive, dual-language curriculum is designed to meet the needs of diverse learners while celebrating the joy of learning for each child. Frog Street is built on proven brain research and is designed to meet the needs of all learners.

**The childcare programs we offer are outlined below:**

**Infants age 6weeks -18 months:** Infants 6 weeks -Frog Street Curriculum for infants provides intentional activities and support in five developmental domains: language, cognitive, social and emotional, physical, and approaches toward learning. Our Infant curriculum is aligned with Head Start School Readiness Goals and offers complete support for caregivers to optimize the growth and development of the children in their care. Designed around early brain research,

the Frog Street Infant curriculum equips caregivers to foster essential growth and build a strong learning foundation for little one's ages 0-18 months.

Infants in our care will get to participate in the following activities:

Story time

Craft time

Learning and using basic sign language

Listening to different genres of music

Focus on letters, counting, colors and body parts

Advancing through tummy time, crawling, pulling up and walking

Playing with engaging toys

Mastering different age-appropriate gross and fine motor skills

Socialization with caregivers and other children

Individual care and attention based on each child's needs and parent requests

Infant Communication: We provide an Infant "my day" for all children under 18 months.

Parents are provided information such as meals, diaper changes, nap times, your child's mood and teacher comments.

Your child will be sent home with their completed class work and arts and crafts at the end of each week.

Infant Nutrition: Upon enrollment, we will ask that each parent of infant children (under 12 months of age), provide us with a bottle-feeding schedule, for their infant. Parents will be asked to update or verify the bottle-feeding plan monthly. Also, an Infant food program feeding preference form will be required prior to the start of care. This form is to gather information regarding when and what formula your child is to be fed. We do provide store brand formula with iron. Please note if your child consumes more formula then we are permitted to provide as per the CACFP guidelines then we will ask you to provide supplementary formula. We do have refrigerators and bottle warmers in both infant classrooms.

Breast feeding: Parents who choose to breastfeed on premises will be provided a place to do so.

**\*Resources on breastfeeding are available at:**

**<https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-resources>**

Infant Nap and Rest Periods: as per the state of Texas, infants are permitted to sleep as needed in a crib for non walkers under one year of age and on their own parent provided nap mat

once they turn one. The cribs are dressed weekly with a clean sheet, and the sheet is changed as needed. We provide the clean, tight-fitting sheets. We do not share playpens or nap mats among multiple infants. Infants who are unable to roll over independently are required to sleep on their back unless the parent submits medical documentation from the child's physician, that the child is to sleep in a position other than on the back. All items made of soft material, such as a blanket, snuggle toy, pillow, or wedge are prohibited from being placed in the crib of children under twelve months. Please do not bring these items into the facility as your child under 12 months is unable to use them. These items can cause suffocation or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Infant Room Cleaning and Sanitation: All persons (infants and staff) hands are washed upon entry to their classroom and as required throughout the day.

Highchairs, bouncers, swings, changing table and toys are sanitized after each use.

Gates and all high touch areas are sanitized multiple times throughout the day as needed.

### **Toddlers 18m – 2 year-olds:**

Toddlers 18m-3y-Frog Street Curriculum is designed around the latest scientific early brain development research, Frog Street's Toddler curriculum is a year-round program for children ages 18-36 months that focuses on enhancing the simple joy of childhood while equipping caregivers to nurture curiosity through exploration.

In addition to participating in Frog Street Curriculum, Toddlers in our care will spend their day by participating in the following activities:

Story time

Craft time

Learning and using basic sign language

Singing songs/ Listening to different genres of music

Learning different materials in English and Spanish

Playing with engaging toys and Sharing

Using age-appropriate classroom materials

Mastering different age-appropriate gross/fine motor skills

Individual and group activities with caregivers and other children

Individual care and attention based on each child's needs and parent requests

Toddler Communication: Your child will be sent home with their completed class work and arts and crafts at the end of each week.

**Pre-K 3 & 4 year olds:**

The Frog Street Threes curriculum is a comprehensive, dual-language program designed to meet the needs of diverse learners while supporting developmental learning domains. Frog Street Threes curriculum enhances literacy development and creates a “social bridge” as children this age begin to interact and share with others. This curriculum for preschoolers also lays the cornerstones for math concepts such as attributes, classification, and patterns, while integrating STEAM content throughout the week. Our curriculum uses early brain-development research as the framework for instruction and offers strong daily routines that develop key social and emotional skills. This 3-year-old preschool curriculum also balances intentional instruction with child-directed play, and values individual differences. It provides comprehensive, integrated, thematic activities in all disciplines and domains. Adult and child interactions are encouraged to help children develop rich oral language and vocabulary as well as strong social and emotional connections. Our PreK class is geared toward preparing your child for kindergarten in all possible aspects. Children in our PreK class spend their day by participating in the following but not limited to activities:

Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance

Discussing the Calendar (Days and Months)

Discussing current age-appropriate events

Singing songs

Story time

Learning different materials in English and Spanish

Arts and Crafts

Handwriting Skills

Practicing scissor skills

Group and individual activities

Individual care and attention based on each child’s needs and parent requests

Pre-K Communication: Your child will be sent home with their completed class work and arts and crafts at the end of the week.

**Before School and/or After School Program (Academic School Year Only):** The Before and After School Program is designed to assist families with the transportation and supervision of

children who attend school away from Central Texas Children's Academy. Children are transported from our center to their designated schools and picked up from school upon dismissal, to return to our center for a fun and productive afternoon. All children receive snack upon arrival and homework assistance if needed. Schools receiving transportation services are updated according to our children enrolled. Based on needs and availability schools may be added or removed as we see fit. Before school care does require children to be dropped off prior to 6:30 AM in order to be transported to school that morning. At 6:30 AM school children acceptance into our center ends. Note: advance enrollment for before school program is required and not guaranteed. For clarification an after-school care only child cannot arrive in the morning to be dropped off at school as the child is not enrolled in us before school program. If your child will not need picked up from school it is the parents/guardians' responsibility to notify us prior to 1:00 PM. Failure to notify us of your child's absence will cause a delay in the pickup process, which may delay pickups from the next school. We make all efforts to be at the schools on time however unaccounted for children almost always cause delays. To prevent any issues, we require all parents to notify us prior to 1:00pm that your child will not need picked up from school. Failure to notify us prior to 1:00pm will result in a fee of \$10 due prior to the next day of care, repeated offenses may result in your child being removed from our school age program. Transportation is provided by Central Texas Transportation Company.

**CAMP (Fall Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Break):** Our CAMP Program is a fun-filled camp program designed for our school age friends. Camp is offered during Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, and Summer Break.

Children attending more than one week out of the summer will be required to purchase a camp t-shirt to help in easily identifying and accounting for all our children in care, while off site.

Field trips days may require an earlier drop off prior to 10:30 AM.in order to participate in the field trip. Arrival time will be specified prior to field trip. Field trips are not guaranteed based on age. We reserve the right to refuse field trips based on behavior, or any other instance that would prevent the child from being able to safely attend field trips. Children with behavior issues will not be able to attend field trips. Transportation for all field trips is provided by Central Texas Transportation Company.

**All Age Groups:** Any incidents/ behavior reports will be documented and presented to you daily at pick up via an incident report. If your child has any major accidents/ incidents/behavior, you will be notified as promptly as possible by the center Director or Director assistant.

**Assessments:** Central Texas Children's Academy has a formal/ written process for using informal assessments provided by Frog Street Curriculum. The assessments are completed biannually at a minimum. The information gained from the Frog Street assessments, is then used to refine how our teachers plan and implement activities within the curriculum. Activities are planned and small groups are assigned based on the results of the assessments. The assessments help provide structure to our curriculum plans and ensure all students have the best opportunity for success throughout the Frog Street curriculum. Assessments are planned for February and August of 2024. Parent teacher conferences will be scheduled once all assessments are complete.

**For information on developmental milestones from birth -12 years visit:**

<https://childmind.org/guide/parents-guide-to-developmental-milestones/>

**Parent teacher conferences:** Parent teacher conferences may be requested by the parents at any time, and one will be scheduled within 7 business days, during non class time. Biannual parent conferences will be conducted. Notification for parent involvement will be sent via Procure.

**Diaper Changes:** Diaper changes are done every two hours unless the child requires more frequent changes. Powders, diaper creams, and ointments must be provided by the parents, along with usage instructions that must be signed and dated by the parent. Please be sure to individually label each diaper, all cream or ointment with the child's first name and last initial.

**Potty Training:** Once your child has began potty training at home and are able to pull his or her pants up and down and express to their teachers that they have to use the potty is when we may begin assisting with potty training. Before transitioning from pull ups to underwear with covers, we do require all children to use the potty consistently without going to the bathroom in the pull up, for a minimum of 2 weeks. We do require plastic underwear covers for all children in underwear until we as a facility determine they are fully potty trained.

**Cleaning and Sanitation:** All person's hands are washed upon entry to their classroom and as required throughout the day. Tables, chairs, classroom materials, and toys are sanitized after each use. Doorknobs, and all high touch areas are sanitized throughout the day as needed.

#### **Days and Hours of Operation:**

Monday-Friday 5:30am-7:00pm

All children must be in care prior to 10:30am. No child is accepted at 10:30AM or later.

NO PICKUP from 11:30am-2:30pm.

Extended hours until 7:30 pm is available for an additional cost of \$20 per week.

**The company observes the following holidays and will be closed on the following days:**

1. January 1, 2025
2. Martin Luther King, Junior Day Monday January 20, 2025
3. Presidents' Day Monday February 17, 2025
4. Good Friday Friday April 18, 2025
5. Memorial Day Monday May 26, 2025
6. Juneteenth Thursday June 19, 2025
7. Independence Day Friday July 4, 2025
8. Labor Day-Monday September 1, 2025
9. Columbus Day-Indigenous People's Day Monday October 13, 2025
10. Veterans Day- Tuesday November 11, 2025
11. Thanksgiving Day and the day after November 27 & 28, 2025
12. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day December 24 & 25, 2025
13. New Year's Eve Wednesday December 31, 2025

**Rates:**

- \$253.50 weekly for limited availability infant placement 0-17 months
- \$203.50 weekly for infants 0-17 months
- \$183.50 weekly for toddlers 18-35 months
- \$163.50 weekly for children 3-5 yrs old

Before/After school care (6Y+)

- \$143.50 before and after school care

CAMP (school age) Thanksgiving Break/Winter Break /Spring Break/Summer Break

- \$143.50 weekly

Daily Rates/Part Time: No scheduled part time days can be guaranteed in advance and are based on availability only. Daily rates must be paid prior to drop off. A child cannot switch to part time with out a 2-week notice. Part time is not always available. Please inquire with center on part time availability.

0-18 m -\$60 per day

18-35m-\$50 per day

35m and up \$45 per day



Enrollment/ Registration fee \$75 per child or \$100 for a family due at enrollment. A yearly activity fee of \$75 and a yearly supply fee of \$75 will both be billed and due yearly on enrollment anniversary. When your child reaches a milestone age that constitutes a decrease in tuition the parent or guardian must notify the facility via Procure message and moving forward pay the designated amount based on the child's new age. If our facility is not notified by the parent in writing of the age /tuition amount change the rate will remain the same. Tuition prices will not be back dated, credited or refunded. Standard full-time rates cover a maximum of 12 hours per day of childcare. \*Daily drop-in rate covers a maximum of 12 hours of childcare. \* CCS full time children are given 12 hours of care per day. If you exceed your allotted amount of hours a day in any setting, under any circumstance, the fee is 10\$ per hour, per child. The hourly rate is charged for a partial hour, and the fee is not prorated. After 7:00 PM the fee is 2\$ per minute per child, this does not pertain to students enrolled in extended hour care. Extended hour care arrangements must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Picking up after 7:00 pm does not constitute extended hour care, immediate placement, nor waive accrued late pick up fees. Central Texas Children's Academy does not offer a refund at any time. Central Texas Children's Academy is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items. No pets or animals are allowed in the building at any time unless they are registered service animals or a classroom pet that meets the designated standards as per childcare licensing.

**Attendance/Absences:** We will not penalize or unenroll a paid child because of their attendance, however we do encourage all students to attend as as often as possible, with an arrival time before 9am class begins. We feel bringing your child consistently will allow he or she the best opportunity for success.

**CCS CUSTOMERS:** Please inform us of any elements related to your CCS enrollment, as we may be able to assist. \*CCS paid customers do have attendance guidelines they are required to follow, which are not determined by Central Texas Children's Academy.

### **What does your child need at Central Texas Children's Academy?**

**\*INFANT Parents must provide at the start of each week:** 40 diapers, 2 packs of wipes, 2 changes of clothes weekly, and a minimum of 4 PRE-MADE READY TO DRINK bottles daily. NO GLASS BOTTLES. When your child starts walking, they will be required to have their own personal nap mat. See below.

**\*All children who walk or are age 12 m plus must provide at the start of each week:** Plastic covered/ waterproof daycare mat (free of tears), that will stay at daycare, 40 diapers and 2 packs of wipes if not potty trained, a minimum of 2 seasonal changes of clothes weekly, small blanket, small pillow weekly and 2 cups daily.

**\*School Age Children:** after school kids are encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle when school is in session and just attending after school. When school age children will be in our care for the full day (when school is not in session) they must come with 2 cups or water bottles.

**Nap Mats:** Each child below the age of 5 years is required to have a nap mat. Please understand that the nap mats are used daily and can become easily “worn.” or “torn”. If at any point your child’s mat receives a hole or tear, it must be immediately replaced. According to Texas standards you must have a nap mats to attend daycare and nap mat must be waterproof and a hole or tear prevents it from being waterproof therefore violates TX daycare requirements.

**Classroom Wipes:** All CHILDREN IN CARE must provide: 1 pack of unscented baby wipes, labeled “CLASSROOM” each month at the start of each month by. 1 pack, per month, per child. These wipes are used for craft cleanups, cleaning up faces /hands, in the class and on the playground. We will collect them at the start of each month. Please give them to the staff member working the door.

All items that come into the center must be individually labeled with your child’s initials. This should include but is not limited to the following: Jackets, extra clothes, wipes, diapers (individually labeled), pacifiers, bibs... cups/bottles should be labeled with a full first name and last initial.

**\*To recap , EVERY MONDAY (or the start of your child’s week) EACH CHILD MUST HAVE: 40 INDIVIDUALLY LABELED DIAPERS (8 per day that we are open in that week), 2 packs of LABELED wipes, a minimum of 2 changes of clothes (LABELED) and their 2 cups that are required daily.**

Every Monday morning please have all 40 diapers, 2 wipes and extra clothes available for inspection at drop off. Please understand, If your child is not in attendance on Monday, the first day of the week he or she returns, they will be required to have all items for the remainder of the week before they are accepted into care. All unused items will be sent home with your child on Friday. If your child is absent on Friday and he or she’s belongings are left at the center over the weekend, you are still required to send all the weekly required items when they return the following week. The items from the previous week will then be sent home at pick up on the day they return.

No child will be accepted at drop off with out all required weekly or daily items items.

**What your child DOES NOT need/Please do not send:** Glass items of any sort, Jewelry, distracting, easily removed hair accessories, hair or clothing accessories that are a choking or safety hazard, monetary change(coins)or paper money unless on applicable days , accessories

that your child can take on and off on their own, clothes that cannot be played outside in, open toe shoes, meaningful valuable items... Also to include Toys and electronics

**\*Toys from home:** Toys from home are NOT permitted to be brought with your child in the morning. We do have enough toys and learning materials for all classrooms. We realize toys from home sometimes bring unwanted behavior affiliated with sharing and sometimes limit socialization, so to prevent any issues we kindly ask parents no to bring those items with your child in the morning. We will however allow a small, soft, nap, comfort item to come with your child if that item makes them more comfortable.

**\*Electronics:** Please do not bring cell phones or electronics. If a child does bring a cell phone or electronic device, it needs to remain OFF in their backpack. If a child for any reason needs to make a phone call, they should ask a staff member for assistance.

**Drop off/Arrival (5:30am-10:29am):** All parents are responsible for signing their child in and out of Procure at drop off and pick up each day. This is imperative and will be strictly enforced. A 2-week forgiveness period will be granted for all new customers. We understand this may seem like a nuisance however it is for safety and must remain accurate. If a circumstance arises and your unable to sign your child in or out due to technical issues or lack of device issues, no worries, please speak with us personally in advance or at drop off or pick up for assistance. Failure to sign your child in or out or failure to communicate with staff in regard to you being unable to do so, will result in a \$2.5 fee that will be charged per missing sign in/out.

**Clothing guidelines:** Your child's items will be kept in their cubby until the item is used and sent home soiled. Any soiled clothes or items will be sent home daily, with the expectation that the parents will return the following morning with another clean change of clothes, or replacement item. To prevent us having to contact you mid day to bring us clothes or pick up your child, please ensure your child has extra clothes available at all times. Shoes are to be considered a necessary item. All children in care must have shoes. No exceptions. Also, please send your child in weather appropriate clothing and ensure the weekly extra clothes are weather appropriate as well. Also please send your child a jacket on cooler days as we do go outside as long as the weather is above 50 degrees. We ask that children do not wear open toe shoes as we play outside and within the facility every day. Children should be dressed appropriately and wear rubber-soled shoes with closed toes to avoid accidents and injuries.

**PROCARE SIGN IN OUT:** All parents , guardians and care takers are responsible for signing their child in and out of Procure at drop off and pick up each day. This is imperative and will be strictly enforced. A 2-week forgiveness period will be granted for all newly enrolled children and their families. We understand this may seem like a nuisance however it is for safety and must remain accurate. If a circumstance arises and your unable to sign your child in or out due to technical issues or lack of device issues, no worries, please speak with us personally in advance or at drop off for assistance. Failure to sign your child in and or out or failure to

communicate with our staff regarding being unable to do so, at the time of drop off or pick up , will result in a \$2.5 fee that will be charged per missing sign in/out.

**Procedures for Parental Notification:** We understand that good communication is important in building a relationship between our facility and you, the parents. Most communication will be done on our app Procure and or posted at our facility. You may also receive a text or telephone call in the event that we need to reach a parent or guardian promptly. If you need to reach us promptly please call us as sometimes messages on Procure go unnoticed and we would hate for that to happen. Director Mrs. Sheena cell (254)466-1913 or our land line at (254)213-1054.

We also ask that you please keep us informed about any significant events in your child's life.

We will discuss and have you sign off on all incident/behavior reports, daily at pick up. Children often receive minor injuries and exhibit different classroom behaviors during the course of their active day. Staff members will complete an incident report for any incident, that must be signed by the parent or authorized pick up. We will contact you immediately in the unlikely event that your child is exhibiting more extreme behaviors that are not able to be redirected or if they sustain a more serious injury or is put at risk in any way.

**Pick up/Release of Children (2:30pm-7:00pm):** All children can only be released to adults who are listed in the child's enrollment paperwork. Please be sure to list your self when completing the paperwork. Once your child is enrolled in care, we require all parents to input all authorized pick up persons into procure, this is to be done prior to the child attending. After your child begins care with us any changes that you need to make to your child's authorized pick-up list may be done in person at the facility or online via our Procure app. If you add or remove a pickup person on Procure we require that you notify the Owner Mr. Billy or Director Mrs. Sheena, to ensure all staff are notified of the changes, prior to your child's dismissal. Please note: The person who picks up your child must produce a picture ID, such as a driver's license. Children cannot be released with out a parent or guardian. No child can walk out of the building to a parent waiting in a car.

**Water Activities and Field Trips:** No child can participate in any field trips without documented permission. A permission form explaining full details of the field trip and transportation permission will be given to each parent to sign and date prior to departure from our facility. Only children who have signed and dated permission form will be able to participate and leave the facility for the pre-planned Field Trip. In summer months we periodically have outdoor sprinkler play for children of most ages. If and when we plan a water sprinkler day parents will be advised in advance so that the necessary items can be brought for the child that day. IE towel, sunblock, change of clothes, water shoes. Only children who have permission to participate in sprinkler play, in the state enrollment packet will be able to participate.

**Meals and Food Services**

Breakfast 8a-845a

Lunch 11a-1145a

Pm Snack 230p-315p

Evening snack 615p-7p

**Nutrition education & procedures:** All children will be provided nutritious meals and snacks which are prepared in our kitchens which have been inspected by the local health department. Parents are required to provide 2 cups (one for water and one for milk) each day the child arrives for care. We currently provide breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack and evening snack. Our menus and food program follow guidelines under the state requirements (milk must be served with breakfast and lunch). We do not charge an extra fee for meals and snacks. An age appropriate, clean, safe place to eat will be provided for all children. Foods and Liquids hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach of children. A child will not go more than three hours without a meal or snack being offered unless the child is sleeping. If you drop your child off after 8:45am please make sure they have already eaten breakfast. Meals cannot be served nor consumed outside of our designated mealtimes. You may choose to opt out of the food program due to reason you see fit, however this decision will require the parent/guardian to provide all meals, snacks and beverages for their child. Opting out of the food program cannot be a daily or partial day decision, if you opt out you are opted out entirely. Foods and Liquids hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach of children. Our center is a peanut free zone. Our Staff does not reward/punish good/un preferred behavior with food of any kind. Students and parents are educated on proper nutrition during the year. These resources are made available in our community resource family binder located in our lobby, via posters in our facility and on our Procare app.

**Birthdays/Special occasions:** All food and drinks brought into our center for special occasions must be store bought and in its original package. This is for the safety of all children.

**Special Diet/ Diagnosed food allergies:** If your child has a diagnosed food allergy, an emergency food allergy plan must be completed by an authorized medical provider. This is a requirement of the state. This form and a headshot photo of your child are each required, 24 business hours in advance prior to your child's start date or return to care with a new food allergy diagnosis.

**Illness and Exclusion Criteria: We cannot care for children who:**

- have uncontrollable cough
- cannot participate comfortably in daily activities

- have an illness that requires more care than staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children
- have more than one episode of diarrhea
- have pink eye or colored eye and or nose discharge
- have consistent cough that has recently begun or worsen
- have a temperature of 99 degrees or higher if not taken orally
- have had an episode of vomiting
- have a rash that has not been recently evaluated by a doctor
- have a communicable disease
- have a special need that becomes or is outside the scope of what we can provide
- have demonstrated consistent behavior that poses a threat or safety to the well-being of staff, other children, or themselves

If the exclusion is illness related, the child can be returned to care once they are free of symptoms for 24 hours. Specific lab testing and results may be required based on facility directors' discretion. Any child with fever while in childcare will be excluded for a minimum of 24 hours with or without a doctor's note. Tylenol or any other fever reducer shouldn't be given to any child expected to attend daycare within 24 hours. A child must be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours with out the use of any fever reducer. If a child has taken fever reducer in the past 24 hours, they cannot be considered fever free and will not be accepted into daycare. In the event of a possibly sick infant, we may ask that bottles are not pre-made so that we can regulate what is being given to the possibly ill child.

If the exclusion is behavior or needs related, the Director will conference with the parent/guardian to determine a plan for returning to the program.

We do understand that parents often find it difficult to miss work, but if we call you and ask you to pick up your child, we expect you to do so as quickly as possible. If we are unable to reach you after multiple attempts or if you do not pick up your child from the center within 60 minutes, this could result in your child being suspended or withdrawn from care. Failure to pick up your child with in the designated 60 minutes does result in a \$40 fee. This fee must be paid prior to your child returning to care.

We will notify you immediately if your child has any of the above listed a temperature of 100 degrees orally/99 degrees on their forehead or under arm and you will need to come pick up your child within 60 minutes of the phone call. High fevers can lead to other health issues. If your child's fever reaches 104 degrees within 30 minutes of notification, we will notify you again. Once the second notification has been done, an ambulance will be called after an additional 20-minute wait. By not answering your phone you are giving us permission to bring in medical help and the hospital will take over. We will not be responsible for any medical bills

that are obtained from the situation. This also includes ANY injury that requires medical attention. To avoid the risk of being unable to be contacted keep up to date phone numbers and emergency contacts.

**Challenging Behavior:** When it comes to challenging behavior, our teachers and or Director will have conversations with the parents to express concerns and discuss strategies in addressing the behavior. Conversations are framed around addressing and correcting our concerns and parents will always be kept informed of their child's progress. Extreme behavior concerns /safety concerns may result in the child being sent home for the day and or suspended the following day/s depending on the severity. However, before terminating care, we will take the proper steps to try and avoid this. The steps taken before terminating care will be verbal, written and then dismissal. We reserve the right to refuse or end services to anyone for any reason. This does not guarantee a refund.

**Biting Policy:** Biting is considered a part of the natural development stage. It is our policy to work with a child that bites to help them use other forms of communication and interaction that will not cause injury to another child. However, if a child bites another child or staff, depending on the severity, the child may be released from care for the day. While it is considered natural, we feel biting is a serious incident, and it may be very traumatic to another child if bitten. Central Texas Children's Academy has the option to dismiss a repetitive biting child from care based on the individual incidents, on a case-by-case basis. However, we will take every step and effort to avoid this as a resolution.

\* We reserve the right to refuse or end services to anyone for any reason. This does not guarantee a refund. Before dismissing any child, we will take the proper steps to try and avoid their dismissal. The steps will be verbal, written and then dismissal.

**Withdraw by Central Texas Children's Academy:** The steps taken before terminating care will be verbal, written and then dismissal. We reserve the right to refuse or end services to anyone for any reason. This does not guarantee a refund.

**Indoor /Outdoor Physical Activity time:** We recognize the critical role that indoor and outdoor physical play has in childcare. It doesn't matter what the physical activity is, nor does it matter how good that they are at it, the most important thing is that they actually enjoy the activity. We understand not all activities are going to be suitable for each individual child, but there will be something across the wide range of physical activities that every child finds rewarding and stimulating. Whether we are waking, jumping, skipping, climbing or catching, hitting or bouncing a ball, there will be a physical activity, that engages and motivates every child. Indoor and outdoor physical activity time is broken up into small structured and unstructured times throughout the day for both toddlers and preschoolers. Am and Pm Physical Activities generally last 45 minutes -1 hour. Physical activity will take place outside in the play area based

on weather, in extreme weather, physical activity will take place indoors in your child's classroom. We recommended all children wear weather appropriate clothing as we will plan on going outside daily weather permitting (a minimum of 50 degrees or higher), please bring a jacket in cooler weather, and we recommend no children over 1 year wear open toes shoes for their own safety.

**Procedures for Handling Medical Emergencies:** In the event of a critical illness or injury, we will take the following actions:

- Call 911 or take the child to the nearest emergency room
- Administer CPR or First Aid, when needed
- Contact the child's physician
- Contact the child's parent or the designated emergency contact if the parent can't be reached
- Contact the licensing representative

**Procedures for Administering Medication:** We will administer prescription medication only. All medications will be administered by the Owner, Director, the Assistant Director, or the designated person in charge. Bring all medication to the office. For the safety of the children, medication cannot be stored in backpacks. All medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's full name, date and instructions. Medication will only be given to the child for whom it is intended. We are not allowed to use one medication for a family. Before any medication is administered, we must have a signed authorization form which must include the times the medication is to be administered. All medication must have a given time to administer; we will not accept as needed. We will only give the amount that is on the labeled direction, and we will not administer any expired medication. All expired medications or medication of a child that is no longer attending must be picked up within 24 hours or it will be discarded. We will not be responsible for replacement or reimbursement for any reason. We do not administer over-the-counter medication. Please be aware that we have the right to administer medication to a child in a medical emergency following the directions as labeled on the bottle. Please inform the Director of any allergies to medication that your child may have.

**Discipline and Guidance:** We emphasize the teaching of appropriate behavior, not the punishment of inappropriate behavior. Children require instruction that is:

- Individualized and consistent for each child
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control



Our staff members are trained to only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction that include the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of appropriate behavior instead of focusing upon unacceptable behavior (We use statements such as make a better choice or was that a good choice to foster self-awareness.)
- Reminding a child of our behavior expectations daily with clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior by using positive statements
- Using brief supervised separation from the group or a preferred activity when the child's behavior needs a time of reflection, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age

There are no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatments directed towards any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or restroom
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriate periods of time for the child's age

\* Any damage caused to the facility or its property by a child or parent/guardian, which is outside of what can be controlled through supervision, will be the financial responsibility of the parent/guardian. This includes purposely, for no apparent reason, pulling the fire alarm. If the fire department arrives to a false emergency and there are fees incurred, Central Texas Children's Academy will not be responsible for them. You, as the parent of the child who pulled the fire alarm, will have one week to pay the fees or your services will be terminated, and your account will be turned over to collections.

**TV/Screen time limitations:** The state has a standard on the use of screen/electronic use in childcare facilities. Due to the standards, no video games, musical devices, or cell phones are permitted to be sent with your child while in care. No child under the age of 2 is permitted to

have any screen time while in care. Screen time is limited for all children over 2 years. Children 2 years and older are able to have 1 hour of screen time maximum per day.

**Screen Time Resources: [www.Healthychildren.org](http://www.Healthychildren.org)**

State Required Employee Training on Abuse and Neglect and How to Report it: All employees of CTX Children's Academy are required to receive annual training in abuse and neglect to include warning signs of abuse and neglect and how to report it to the proper authorities. CTX Children's Academy will document any concerns of abuse and neglect and will report anything, if necessary.

**Signs of Physical Abuse:** Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the child:

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence of school
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver

**Signs of Neglect:** Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental cares, immunizations, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- States that there is no one at home to provide care

**Signs of Sexual Abuse:** Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the child:

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Reports nightmare or bed wetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or adult caregiver

**Signs of Emotional Maltreatment:** Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the child:

- Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression

- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head banging, for example)
- Is delayed physically or emotionally
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent

**Immunization Requirements:** For the protection of your child as well as the other children in our facility, all children must have all vaccinations required by the Texas Department of Health. You must provide an immunization record upon enrollment and provide updates to that record whenever your child receives more immunizations. Failure to provide proper records could result in suspension of care until the records are brought in (this will not obligate us to refund any tuition).

**For more information about immunizations, please visit the health department's website at: [www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize).**

**For health benefits information and resources, please visit:**

**[Texaschildrenshealthplanbenefits.org](http://Texaschildrenshealthplanbenefits.org)**

**Killeen Free Clinic (254)618-4211**

**Oral Health:** Our facility partners with local oral health professionals yearly to give a fun demonstration, knowledge and resources to our children in care.

**Cdc.gov (Oral Health)**

**For Babies**

- Wipe gums twice a day with a soft, clean cloth in the morning after the first feeding and right before bed. This wipes away bacteria and sugars that can cause cavities.
- When teeth come in, start brushing twice a day with a soft, small-bristled toothbrush and plain water.
- Visit the dentist by your baby's first birthday to spot signs of problems early.
- Talk to your dentist or doctor about putting fluoride varnish on your child's teeth as soon as the first tooth appears.

*For children younger than 2 years, consult first with your doctor or dentist about the use of fluoride toothpaste.*

**For Children**

- Brush their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.

- Help your child brush their teeth until they have good brushing skills. *If your child is younger than 6 years, watch them brush. Make sure they use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste and always spit it out rather than swallow.*
- Ask your child's dentist to apply dental sealants when appropriate.
- Drink tap water that contains fluoride.

**Vaccine Preventable Diseases:** Tuberculin tests are not required at this time; however, we do encourage staff members to be tested. While no vaccinations are required for our staff members, we do strongly encourage them to receive annual flu shots and to obtain the Varicella and MMR vaccinations.

**Vision and Hearing Screenings:** State laws require vision and hearing screenings for children four years and older in the preschool program. Please provide copies of your child's screening results within four months of the child's fourth birthday. We will consider providing an opportunity for children to receive the screenings at the center, if arrangements can be made with an outside contractor. The fee for this service will be determined by the provider. Parents can take advantage of these screenings or take their child to outside specialists.

**Toy Recall:** Our company keeps a list of current recalled toys from the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission which can be found at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). The toys they list are not made to standards and safety regulations and will be removed immediately from our facility.

**Gang Free Zone:** Our facility is a gang free zone. A gang free zone is a designated area around a specific location where certain gang related activity is prohibited and is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. This means that certain gang related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1,000 feet of our facility is a violation of the law and is, therefore, subject to penalty. Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the goal of a gang-free zone is to deter certain types of criminal activity where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties. Specific locations where certain gang related criminal activity is prohibited includes, but is not limited to, public schools, playgrounds, video arcade facilities, and day care centers. This includes Central Texas Children's Academy.

**Enrollment Process:** Prior to enrollment all families must take a tour of the facility and meet our teaching staff, including your child's classroom teacher. During the tour we will go over our parent handbook and company policies.

You must submit your child's completed paperwork. Once the paperwork is submitted you will receive a Procare invite. This is the app you will use to submit payment and communicate with CTCA staff regarding any questions you may have. To enroll your child you must pay the enrollment fee plus your child's first week of tuition, a minimum of 24 business hours in advance prior to the date you would like your child to start.

Once your child's enrollment fee and first week's tuition has been paid please call to confirm your planned start date. We require your child's Procure profile be complete with the following: a clear profile picture, date of birth, parents' names and telephones numbers and all authorized pick-up persons who are listed in the paperwork added into Procure also. This is to be done prior to the child attending and your child will not be accepted into care with out all items completed. Please note: If your child has a food allergy, or medical diagnosis that may impact care as there are additional state requirements/forms needed prior to them being able to start attending CTCA.

If your child is enrolled for full time care and you take a leave of absence (without paying the weekly rate to hold the child's spot) a re-enrollment fee will be due upon child's return. At the time of enrollment indicate whether your child is full time or drop in. Once a child is enrolled to occupy a full-time spot, a two-week notice is due in writing to switch the child to a drop-in spot or to unenroll.

Part time/ drop in children are required to pay prior to child/children being dropped off at the facility. Part-time drop-in spots cannot be guaranteed in advance and will be given away to a child requesting the full-time spot if necessary.

An opportunity for an extended visit in the classroom by both parent and child for a period of time to allow both to be comfortable is allowed on your child's first day of day care. While touring our facility we ask all families to please consider limiting technology use, as it is best if the parents are not distracted by the use of electronics.

Please also note: Any new medical or food allergy diagnosis, will result in additional state require paperwork that must be completed and returned to our center. Once the required forms are returned to our center, a 24-business hour waiting period will take place. Your child will not be able to attend during the 24-hour wait period. This time frame is required to ensure all required building documentation regarding the diagnosis are posted and to ensure staff have proper training on your child's new diagnosis before he or she returns to care.

#### **Forms Required before a child may enroll at our facility:**

- The first 4 forms are regarding enrollment into our center. They are as follows ,1. A state of Texas Childcare Admission Packet, 2. a Media Consent form, 3. a Discipline & Guidance form and 4. a Parent handbook receipt acknowledgment page (This is located in the back of the parent handbook. Please keep the book and return the back page to us).
- We also require a copy of your child's current immunization records before they are able to start at our facility. This is required for all children. The only exception would

be if your child is 5 years of age or older and is enrolled in Killeen Independent School District, current immunization records are not required. PLEASE REMEMBER WHEN TAKING YOUR CHILD IN FOR A CHECK UP; IF HE OR SHE ARE GIVEN ANY VACCINATIONS, PLEASE ASK FOR AN UPDATED COPY FOR DAYCARE.

- There are several Food program enrollment forms that are required before enrollment. Take note\* The food program forms are submitted to the Department of Agriculture and must be neatly written. They have been known to return paperwork to us when information is not legible or has errors scribbled out. Please try to complete these forms as neat as possible to prevent having to re do them. The food program forms that we need completed and returned to us are ,1. food program income eligibility form, 2. Food program enrollment form and 3. Infant food program meal preference form (for all children under 12 months) Yes, you do have to put the last 4 of your social security number. Failure to provide the required proper information on these may result in a delay of enrollment or may cause a future delay if for any reason the forms are returned to us by the Department of Agriculture.
- Additional Forms that may be required based on your child (including but not limited to forms such as, Allergy action plan forms or medication authorization forms).

***Important: A “Health Care Professional’s Statement” is required for all children not enrolled in KISD. The health care professional’s statement is due no later than 30 days from the date of admission.***

***A statement signed by your child’s medical professional that says, “I have examined the above-named child within the past year and find that he or she is able to take part in the day care program” Is what is required. There is no specific form however this is a state of Texas requirement.***

We will maintain confidentiality of this information. Please provide us updated information whenever there is a change. We will ask you to complete a new Admission Form every year to make sure we have the most current information possible.

We will ask you to sign a statement acknowledging receipt of a copy of this parent handbook, which obtains our operational Policies. If we need to change any of these policies, you will be notified of the changes in writing before the change takes effect. Please read carefully through our policies because you are responsible for all the information that is given to you. If you have any questions or concerns about the policies, you can speak with the Owner or Director at any time.

**Parents updating information:** After your child begins care any changes that you need to make to your child's authorized pick-up list may be done in person at the facility or online via our Procure app. If you add or remove a pickup person on Procure we require that you notify the Owner Mr. Billy or Director Mrs. Sheena, to ensure all staff are notified of the changes, prior to your child's dismissal.

**Enrollment/ Re-enrollment Fee:** There is a \$75 per child or \$100 per family enrollment fee that must be paid when you register your child(ren) for childcare. This fee is charged annually to your account. Any unpaid lapse in childcare will result in said child needing to be re-enrolled and will also be subject to re-enrollment fee of \$100 per family. Enrollment fee/ re-enrollment fee is non-refundable for any reason. If a child was previously enrolled and full 2-week notice was not given, when you return you will be required to pay a re enrollment fee, and your weekly tuition will increase by \$10 or to the new designated rate. Once enrolling your child, the standard tuition is due weekly to hold your child's spot regardless of attendance.

**Disenrollment:** If you wish to discontinue with childcare, we must receive written notice a minimum of two weeks (14 days) in advance prior to the end of childcare. Once notice is given you will be required to pay the final 2 weeks of childcare upfront before care is provided in that final 2-week time frame. Keep in mind weekly tuition is due on Monday. Paying past the due date (Monday) does not dismiss paying the last full two weeks (14 days) of care. To clarify, if you give a letter of intent to unenroll on a Wednesday, that last full 2 weeks of payment is still due. The last week of care is not prorated by day if your child was signed up for full time Monday-Friday care. If a written notice is not provided your child is still considered enrolled at our facility and you are responsible for weekly payments and any fees associated. No items will be issued to parents until your final 2-week notice is paid in full. No refunds: All payments are final, and no refunds are given.

**Payment Methods and Due Dates:** We accept parent processed and parent-initiated payments from PROCARE only. Therefore, I acknowledge all payments sent to this facility via Procure are not fraudulent in nature and may not be reversed as all payments are nonrefundable. A Procure App link will be sent to you via phone or email once you return your child's enrollment paperwork to the facility. Weekly payments for childcare are due every Sunday for the upcoming week. Weekly invoices are not sent on Procure. A manual payment on the parents' end is required. To process a manual payment double click the check mark, which will allow you to enter your amount you wish to pay. If payment is not received by Sunday at (7:30pm) your payment is then considered past due, and a late fee is charged. No child will be able to attend until payment is made and full balance including daily late fees are paid. Late fees start being billed after 7:30 pm Sunday night and continue to be charged daily at that time each night, moving forward until full balance is paid.

**Payment Arrangements:** Payment arrangements are an exception to our policy of paying for care in advance of receiving care. They can only be approved by the Owner and are reserved for exceptional cases. Each case is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Getting an approved payment arrangement will stop late payment fees from being charged to your account unless you do not keep up with your end of the arrangement. However, late payment fees may be incorporated into the agreement; each payment arrangement is different. If you default on a payment arrangement, we will start applying late fees immediately and collection process, if necessary.

**Vacation Holding Fees/Sick Time:** Vacation time can be taken but no fee adjustment will be made. If your child falls ill and is unable to attend, no fee adjustment will be made. Once enrolling your child, the standard tuition is due weekly to hold your child's spot regardless of attendance. Part time students may lose their spot to a child requesting a full-time spot. Any unpaid lapse in childcare will result in said child needing to be re-enrolled and will also be subject to re-enrollment fee \$75 per child or \$100 for family. Enrollment fee/ re-enrollment fee is non-refundable for any reason.

**Collections:** We expect payment for services in a timely manner as outlined and agreed upon above. It is not our desire to begin collection process on any of our clients. We will work with you on payment arrangements when exceptional instances arise. The court collection process will begin after the 10<sup>th</sup> daily late fee is applied, if the balance is left unpaid or if there is no promissory note on file.

**The role and influence of families:** Families have strong and sustained effects on children's development, learning, and wellness. Studies indicate that nurturing, responsive, and sensitive parenting promotes social-emotional competence and academic success, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. Parents are able to review a copy of the minimum standards available in our office. Our most recent Licensing Inspection Report is always posted on our Parent Board. You may also review the standards and our compliance history at [www.txchildcaresearch.org](http://www.txchildcaresearch.org). We are regulated by the Department of Family and Protective Services. You can find out more about the regulations of childcare facilities by visiting their website at [www.txchildcaresearch.org](http://www.txchildcaresearch.org). You may contact the Licensing Office by calling 254-526-9011 or in person at 405 E. Elms Rd., Killeen, TX 76542. You may report suspected abuse or neglect of children by calling the child abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

**Inclement Weather:** We will follow the KISD inclement weather/closure schedule as a rule of thumb. Parents can get updates on KCEN.

**Emergency Preparedness Plan:** In the case of a fire or any other incident that results in the evacuation of the facility, the children will be evacuated according to the emergency evacuation plan. We will relocate to our playground. If our playground is not a safe due to



weather or outside conditions, we will relocate to our neighbors Clinica Hispana also located at 2804 S WS Young Dr. Suite 200. All parents will be notified in a timely manner and further instructions will be disseminated, given the circumstances.

In the event of severe weather, we will attempt to contact parents if we feel the need to close the facility. It will be each parent's responsibility to remain up to date with the weather to be prepared for possible closure. If parents are unable to pick up their child before a weather hazard occurs, such as a tornado, the facility will then follow the severe weather plan of action.

**Family Participation:** If you would like to volunteer, please speak to the Director to see how you could volunteer in the facility. If you want to volunteer on a regular basis there will be a volunteer process and background check requirements.

**Questions or Concerns:** In the event that you have a concern that you feel needs management, we ask that you do not message it on Procare, as that is mainly monitored by our staff. If you have any concerns that you feel need addressed by management, please contact our owners directly. Mrs. Sheena Price or Mr. Billy Coach. They can be reached by calling the facility @ (254)213-1054 or Mrs. Sheena's cell is 254-466-1913.

Lastly, at Central Texas Children's Academy we take pride in our exceptional care of the children. And we are always striving to be better. We want our children in care to love us and we want our parents to feel the same. Please know we are open to suggestions and feedback as we just want to be great for you and your children. Thank you for choosing us for your family childcare needs. We give you our word that we will do everything in our power to exceed your expectations.

Central Texas Children's Academy

# Parent Handbook and Operations Policies Receipt

The following items were completed/discussed during our orientation to Central Texas Children's Academy:

Tour the facility, introduction to teaching staff, Parent/ Family visit with the classroom teacher, Overview of Parent Handbook, Policy for arrival & late arrival(pg. 7), Opportunity for an extended visit in the classroom by both parent/family and child for a period of time to allow both to be comfortable( pg. 21), An explanation of Texas Rising Star Quality Certification( pg. 25), Encouraging parent/family to inform the provider of any elements related to their CCS enrollment that the provider may be of assistance( pg. 9), An overview of family support resources and activities in the community( pg. 26), Child development and developmental milestones(pg. 7), Parents/Families are informed of the significance of consistent arrival time and consistent routines( pg. 9), Statement is shared with parents/families regarding limiting technology use on-site in order to facilitate better communication between the parents/families and caregiver and the parents/families and child, is best if parent/family is not distracted by use of electronic devices while at the center( pg. 21), Statement is shared with parents/families reflecting the role and influence of families( pg. 24).

I have received a copy of Central Texas Children's Academy Parent Handbook and Operational Policies. I have read and reviewed all items. I am responsible for the items outlined in these policies.

_____	_____
Printed Name	Date
_____	_____
Parent/Guardian Signature	Student Name
_____	_____
Central Texas Children's Academy Staff Signature	Date



