



Parent Agreement Handbook

1140 S. Buffalo St.
Canton, Texas 75103
903-567-5715

6:30 am - 6:00 pm
Monday – Friday (Year-Round)
Ages 6 weeks- 13years

Pecan Ridge School
Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Our School!

We are glad that you have chosen us to provide safe and stimulating early care and education for your child. This Parent Handbook and Agreement should serve as your guide to our program. It is also part of the contractual agreement between you as the parent or guardian and Pecan Ridge School. The Handbook, together with the Enrollment Application and any addendum or policy issued by the school, governs the terms of your child's enrollment and attendance at the school, your financial responsibility, and the expectations we have of each other in relation to your child and our school. We look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Philosophy – Pecan Ridge School is an educational licensed day school for children. The purpose of this school is to provide a safe, loving, nurturing and educational environment. Our goal is to meet the individual needs of each child, which includes the emotional, physical, social, and mental needs.

First Day Preparation

Many young children are anxious about new experiences, especially starting at a new school. Our teachers and staff will work to make your child's adjustment as smooth as possible. The following suggestions may help make your child's transition easier.

- Consider visiting the school for a brief period before your child's first day. Arrangements can be made for your child to share lunch or story time with his or her new friends before their first full day.
- Talk to your child in an excited way about coming to school. Tell your child exactly what will happen several times before the first morning. Let him or her know that the teachers will help make school days fun.
- Listen to your child's feelings about going to school and encourage him or her to feel good about this new experience. Please share any concerns or fears that your child may have with the teacher, so that he or she may pay special attention to these issues right from the start.
- If you feel sad when you leave the first few times, please try to hold your tears until your child is out of sight. Most of us have had that experience and can identify with your feelings. While it is hard not to show your emotions, it is best for your child to know that you feel good about leaving him or her at school.
- Please feel free to call and check on your child. We will let you know how your child is adjusting.

Arrival and Dismissal Policies

Teachers have a planned curriculum and children should be in their classrooms by 9:00 a.m. ready to begin learning.

Parents are required to accompany their child to the classroom or other designated drop-off location each day. You must notify the teacher in charge when your child arrives and when he or she departs with you. Parents are required to keep their child close and within their direct sight while entering and exiting the building. We may release your child to you or to an authorized pick-up contact, listed on the enrollment application or named in writing to the school ahead of time, who is either known to staff or provides photo identification. All drop-offs and pick-ups must be completed using the school's sign-in and sign-out procedures.

Children who are not picked up by 6:00 p.m. will be kept by a school employee until the parent or an authorized adult arrives. Late fees will be applied, and the clock at the facility will be used to determine this charge. (See Fee Schedule)

Attendance

We ask that all children enrolled attend on a regular basis and arrive by our Drop-Off Time. If your child will not attend as scheduled, please inform us by 9am. If your school-age child will not be riding school-provided transportation any day, please notify the school by 1:30pm. If a child's tuition is subsidized by a program with an attendance requirement, and the child fails to meet the attendance requirement, where permitted, you will be responsible for any charges not paid by the program, and the child may be disenrolled if payment is not received when due. Full tuition is owed for the days a child is enrolled at our school even if they do not attend, whether or not the child receives subsidized tuition.

What to Send with Your Child to School

Parents are asked to send a change of outer and under clothes, including socks, diapers (if applicable), labeled bottles with caps (if applicable), a blanket for nap time. All items should be labeled with your child's name. We ask that you not allow your child to bring toys from home because they may create jealousy and tension among the other children. We are not responsible for any items brought from home. If your child regularly comes to school without appropriate and sufficient clothing or grooming, we may require you to address the issue before allowing your child to return to school. Please dress your child in washable play clothes suitable for all types of activities, including painting and eating. We ask that you label all apparel. Every child should have a full change of clothing in their assigned cubby or locker. We are not responsible for lost or damaged clothing. Please check the lost and found if an item is missing. Infants and toddlers are not permitted to wear earrings or jewelry, including teething necklaces, as they can injure a child, especially

in a group environment. Jewelry may be removed by teachers for safety. We discourage all children from wearing jewelry to school.

Fingernails - Please keep your child's fingernails always trimmed and well-groomed. Proper maintenance will reduce the incidences of children scratching themselves or others. This is especially true for children aged two and under. You will also help reduce the spread of germs while assisting your child with hand washing skills.

Child Injury or Illness While at School

While our sick child policy and school safety measures are effective in preventing many illnesses and injuries during the school day, we recognize that minor illnesses and injuries may nevertheless occur. If your child becomes ill or suffers an injury other than a minor bump or scrape while at school, we will attempt to notify you first and then your child's emergency contacts designated in the enrollment agreement or otherwise in writing for further instructions. You agree that if we are unable to reach you, we may rely on the instructions of your child's emergency contacts to address illnesses or injuries that do not appear to require urgent medical attention. We will use standard first aid methods to care for minor bumps and scrapes and will notify you of any minor injuries at the end of the day. In the event of an illness that requires urgent attention, if we are unable to reach you, we will call an ambulance if it appears that medical attention may be required before the end of the school day. You understand and agree that, while our teachers are trained in basic first aid, they are not medical professionals and may use the judgment of a reasonable layperson in responding to your child's injury or illness. As between you and the school, you are responsible for any charges for medical care required or received during the school day.

If your child has a medical or other condition that requires a particular accommodation or response (e.g., an allergy that requires use of an EpiPen), you understand that you must notify us in writing in the enrollment application or by providing us other written notice. You also understand and agree that you must complete the Medical Authorization/Allergy Plan before your child attends school. **YOU MUST NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY AND IN WRITING OF ANY CHANGE IN PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION.** In the event of change of information, we reserve the right to require state mandated supporting documentation.

When to Keep your Child Home

To protect the health of our school families, any children exhibiting the following illnesses or physical symptoms are not permitted to attend school until they do not have symptoms or meet the specific return-to-school criteria listed below. A child with any of the illnesses or symptoms listed below should not be sent to school, and a child who develops any of the listed illnesses or symptoms while at school may be sent home and should not return

until the child is symptom free or in the case of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting, at least 24 hours have passed without the use of medication.

- Diarrhea — in diapered children if stool is not contained in the diaper; in toilet-trained children, if diarrhea is causing “accidents;” in any child, if the child experiences two stools more than usual during the school day (e.g., three or more stools in two hours)
- Breathing difficulty, rapid breathing, and/or severe coughing
- Fever - An axillary (armpit) temperature above 100 degrees
- Head lice (may return when treated and free of all lice and nits)
- Red eyes with discharge (Pink eye)
- Severe or harsh cough with thick green discharge from nose
- Severe pain or discomfort Vomiting — two or more episodes of vomiting in a 24-hour period
- Any temporary illness or injury that prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities or results in a greater need for care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children at school.
- Chickenpox
- COVID-19 positive test or potential exposure (may return when CDC or state/local guidelines allow)

We follow the THHS Communicable Disease Chart to determine readmittance. We work to protect the health and safety of all members of our school family.

Communicable Disease Reporting

It is our policy to comply with state and local laws that require reporting of certain communicable diseases.

Medication Administration

We do not administer any medication, except in case of emergency (e.g., rescue inhalers, EpiPen, etc.), school staff will administer medications at the interval directed on the package or prescription provided. School staff will not administer non-emergency medication on an “as-needed” basis.

- Medications must be brought to the school in its original packaging with visible dosage and administration instructions and placed in a sealed plastic bag labeled with the child’s name.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for retrieving any medication at the end of each school day. We do not store medication at the school overnight unless instructed to do so in writing by the school Director.
- You understand and agree that school personnel are not medical personnel, are not responsible for determining whether to administer medication to your child

based on the child's condition. We must follow package instructions in administering medication you provide unless separate written instructions signed by a healthcare provider are given to the school with the medication.

- We do not use unassigned epinephrine auto-injectors.

Parent Participation/Communication

Parents are welcome to visit their child at any time of the day. You are very welcome here! Parents who can comply with the school's volunteer policies are encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom. The children will benefit greatly from your participation. Examples of opportunities for you to volunteer include going along on special activities or field trips; helping with meals; making classroom materials; reading stories; speaking to the class about your special hobbies or interests; or donating materials for art projects, the home living center, etc. We hope that you will participate in Parent conferences and meetings. If you have a concern about your child and would like to request a conference, please speak to the Director. Effective communication between Parent and teacher is essential. Parents are asked to share any pertinent information with the Director. We always encourage Parents to ask questions and make suggestions. Parent communication will be by email, written notices posted on the front door, text messages, phone calls.

Discipline and Positive Guidance

Discipline shall:

- Be individualized and consistent for each child.
- Be appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Be directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction shall be used, including:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- Using brief supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the age of the child.

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training.

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- 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.
- Subjecting children to psychological abuse or using coercion.
- 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 inappropriately long periods for the child's age.

Behavior and Positive Guidance

We rely on all our members — children, staff, teachers, Parents, and family members — to engage in appropriate and respectful behavior that supports our school mission. When this behavior fails to meet this expectation, we will use positive guidance to promote positive behavior. In cases of serious or ongoing issues, we may be forced to suspend or permanently disenroll a child. Teachers will address inappropriate behavior in an age-appropriate way by verbally discouraging the behavior and/or redirecting a child to an appropriate activity. Short cooling-off periods followed by a discussion of the incident and appropriate behavior may be used with preschoolers and older children at the teacher's discretion. Corporal punishment is not allowed at school. If serious or repeated behavior issues develop, we may notify Parents and provide copies of relevant incident reports, copies of which will be kept in the child's file at the school. We may also invite Parents/Guardians to conference with us to help the child.

If we are not successful in addressing repeated behavior challenges, or in the case of behavioral challenges that we determine to be very serious, we may determine that the most appropriate response is to separate the child from the school on a temporary (suspension) or permanent (disenrollment) basis.

If a Child is separated from the school for behavioral reasons, full tuition must be paid for periods of temporary separation and no refunds will be offered for temporary or permanent separation.

Rest Time / Safe Sleep

Infants through pre-school age children will be provided with a nap or rest time daily. We encourage your child to rest during that period. Blankets will need to be provided by the parents. Blankets must be labeled and laundered weekly. We will follow the guidelines below for infants ages twelve (12) months and younger:

- Infants will be placed to sleep on their backs. We are unable to accommodate requests for exceptions to this policy, except (where state regulations allow) in case of medical necessity certified in writing by the child's physician.

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- Infants will be placed to sleep in a crib, with no swaddle, blanket, pillow, wedge, or other item except an appropriate crib sheet and pacifier. Infants may be placed to sleep in a sleep sack if requested. Parents may be asked to provide the sleep sack. Infants who fall asleep outside of a crib will be moved to a crib as soon as possible.
- Parents should notify us when an infant is able to roll over on their own. Once we receive written notice from a Parent that an infant can roll over on their own, if the infant rolls over to sleep, they will be allowed to sleep in the position they choose. Infants will be placed on their stomachs to play each day for “tummy time.” This experience can help infants develop strong neck and shoulder muscles and promote motor skills. Tummy time can also prevent the back of the baby’s head from developing flat spots. During tummy time, a teacher will be nearby the infant and engaged with the infant. Infants will be placed on a soft surface such as a carpet or foam pad, or on the lap of their caregiver, for tummy time. State specific guidelines related to tummy time that include additional requirements must also be followed.

Meals

Parents of children at schools participating in the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are required to provide additional income information, which will only be used for CACFP eligibility and audit purposes. This documentation includes, but is not limited to, the Income Eligibility Form (Meal Benefits Form) or equivalent, as directed by the school. We discourage food from home being brought into our centers except when a child requires a special diet because of a medical condition or lifestyle preference (e.g., vegetarian). Special diet requests must be presented in writing. The school will make reasonable efforts to accommodate special diets, but if we are unable to make accommodation, Parents may be required to send meals from home. Meals provided from home must meet USDA guidelines/Childcare Licensing regulations for nutritionally sound and well-balanced meals. If food is provided from home, it must be provided consistently every day and must be labeled with the child’s name and the date. As the school promotes healthy eating practices, please do not send chips, snack food, sweet desserts, or carbonated beverages to school with your child. We are a tree-nut and peanut-free center, and usually have multiple children with food allergies who may be affected by exposure to foods eaten by others. Children must finish any outside food or drink before entering our school.

Infant Meals

We participate in the CACFP and offer a single type of formula, baby food, and iron-fortified infant cereal to all infants. Parents who wish to provide breast milk or formula from home must provide it in clean bottles already prepared and labeled with the child’s first and last name, contents, and date. Bottles sent from home will be refrigerated at our

school and discarded if left at the end of the day. Parents of infants in CACFP-participating schools must complete CACFP infant paperwork as part of the enrollment process.

Children with Severe Allergies

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the “Food Allergy Emergency Plan” form, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child’s physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every six months, or as needed. This form can be obtained by request from the school Director. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein.

Immunizations

Each child enrolled or admitted to child-care centers must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). This requirement applies to all children in care from birth through 14 years of age. You must maintain current immunization records for each child in your care, including any immunization exemptions or exceptions.

Exemptions: A child may be exempt from immunization requirements for a medical reason or reason of conscience, including a religious belief. To claim an exemption, the person applying for the child's admission must meet criteria specified by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) rule at 25 TAC §97.62.

Hearing and Vision Screening

Hearing and Vision Screening for possible vision and hearing problems is required by the Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 36, for children who are 4-years old.

Parents are required to bring in screening proof from their local pediatrician.

Handbook and Policy Changes

From time to time, the school may amend this Handbook and/or school policies and may implement new policies or discontinue existing policies. Any such change is effective on the date the change is implemented, and the school will make any changes available to Parents within 30 days of implementation. If events outside the school’s reasonable control affect school operations, the school may modify its operations, policies, and procedures until such events abate as the school in its sole discretion deems necessary.

Transportation

During the school year, we provide transportation to and from the local public and private schools. If you need transportation services, please see the Director for a list of the local public schools that we currently serve in your area.

Any child that is transported in our vehicle will abide by the following safety procedures.

- Children will be picked up and dropped off in a designated area.
- Children waiting for the vehicle must remain in the designated area until we arrive at that location.
- Any child riding our vehicle will be seated in a seat and restrained by a seat belt or other seat restraint system as required by law based on the child's age and weight.
- Children are expected to act in an orderly manner.
- Continued disruptive behavior by any child on the vehicle may result in termination of transportation and/or childcare services. Parents must notify us in advance if their child will not ride our transportation on a regularly scheduled day.
- Children must comply with all instructions of school personnel while traveling in a school vehicle.
- Children must arrive at the designated pick-up location before the pick-up time. School vehicles will use reasonable efforts to arrive and depart on time and will not wait for children who are not in the pick-up area at the designated pick-up time.

Field Trips

We organize field trips from time to time and will provide Parents with advance notice of scheduled field trips. Field trips take place during the school day, and we encourage all children in attendance on the day of the field trip to participate. Occasionally, a nominal fee may be charged for a field trip, which must be paid for in advance. Parents are invited to participate in all field trips. However, all children must travel to and from field trips in school vehicles operated by school employees.

Water Activities

Swimming or other water activities may be seasonally available at the school. Parents may opt in to swimming and other water activities by completing the Swimming and Water Activities portion of the admission form. Parents who want their child to participate in swimming or water activities must provide a swimsuit, towel, and (if applicable for diapered children) swim diaper. Additional documentation may be required for your child to participate in swimming or other water activities based on our state or local requirements.

Animals

From time to time, we may have classroom pets that meet the requirements of Child Care Licensing. A notice to parents will be posted outside any classroom door when a pet is present.

Outdoor Time

We strongly believe and support the need for physical activity each day.

When children participate in physical activity every day, multiple health benefits accrue. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk for developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also have beneficial influences on academic performance. In addition, cognitive skills and motor skills appear to develop through a dynamic interaction. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

Infants will be given opportunities for physical activity, including supervised tummy time. Toddler age children will participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day. Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten children will participate in a minimum of 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

School age children who are in attendance for a full day will participate a minimum of 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day. School age children who are only in attendance after-school will participate in a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day. Opportunities for active play may overlap with outdoor play when the weather permits. We will promote all children's active play every day. Children will have ample opportunity to do moderate to vigorous activities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping, to the extent of their abilities.

All children will participate each day in:

- Two occasions of active play outdoors when weather permits.

Physical activity may take place in the classroom or on the playground when weather permits.

When participating in physical activity, children's clothing should protect them from sun exposure and permit easy movement (not too loose and not too tight) that enables full participation in active play. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Hats may be worn to protect children from sun exposure.

Examples of appropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Gym shoes or sturdy shoe equivalent (No sandal/open toed footwear)
- Clothing for the weather, such as a lightweight, breathable jacket without any hood and neck strings.

Examples of inappropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Footwear that can come off while running or that provide insufficient support for climbing.
- Clothing that can catch on playground equipment, such as those with drawstrings or loops.

Extreme Weather Conditions

Our school shall provide daily outdoor activities, weather permitting.

- Modify scheduled times for outdoor activities during the summer and winter months. For example, during the hot summer months, allow children to go outside earlier in the day when temperatures are cooler. Check local media outlets for weather advisories and adjust outdoor play times accordingly.
- Keep additional clothing on site to ensure that children are not restricted from outdoor activities due to a lack of adequate clothing (e.g., coats and long-sleeved shirts for cooler months and shorts and short-sleeved shirts for warmer months, etc.).
- Note: The Air Quality Index (AQI) provides daily information on how clean or polluted the outdoor air is, along with associated health effects that may be of concern. Find information about local air quality conditions and the AQI at: <http://www.airnow.gov/>.
- Listen to local media sources or a weather radio for weather alerts/weather watches. A weather watch chart is available at: <http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/Weatherwatchchart.pdf>

For instructions on how to use the chart, see page 2 of the weather watch chart document.

- Provide a variety of outdoor experiences during outdoor play (not limited to gross motor activities) to include child-directed activities such as art, science, books, dramatic play, etc.

Insect Repellent and Sunscreen

We will apply sunscreen and/or bug repellent as needed. Sunscreen and bug repellent must be provided by the parent, must be in the original container, and must not have expired. A “Sunscreen/Bug Repellent Permission Slip” must be completed by the parent before these items can be applied.

Questions or Concerns

We value all feedback from members of our school family and if parents have questions or concerns about our program, we encourage you to have open communication with your child’s teacher and the school Director. Through open communication, we can ensure that all parties are well informed and working as partners in the child’s education.

Parent Volunteer

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. There are many ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the childcare center. Parents may volunteer to attend trips, read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Teachers will have posted in their classrooms any volunteer opportunities available. Parents not interested in volunteering directly in the classroom may donate items, do maintenance work, or assist in the front office. These volunteer opportunities are posted in the front office area on the parent bulletin board. Any parent who volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions, and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom, or on field trips.

Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order. For example, if a parent is afforded custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, that parent will only be able to volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation only (sole/exclusive custody arrangements), will only be permitted to volunteer with the express written permission of the custodial parent. We reserves the right to make volunteer assignments. We do not guarantee the volunteering parents will be assigned to locations where their child(ren) is present.

State Licensing Authority

Minimum Standards 746.501(22,23)

Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing.

A full printed copy of the licensing regulations/standards can be found at the front desk.

Parents may also find the licensing regulations on the internet at the following link

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation/minimum-standards>

Parents may also review a copy of the child-care center's most recent licensing inspection report posted on the Parent Communication board in the front entry or on the licensing website listed above. Parents may reach childcare licensing by using the website above or calling the local offices listed below:

Dallas County (214) 583-4253 / (800) 582-6036

Denton County (940) 381-3400

Van Zandt County (903) 533-4173

These regulations/standards are included as part of this Parent Handbook as if they were written herein and it is the responsibility of every parent to read, understand, and follow these regulations. Employees and parents are required to uphold the regulations

and standards issued by The Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards at all times. Employees and parents are required to immediately notify the school Director of any violations of licensing regulations by any person in the organization.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Parents may review the Emergency Preparedness Plan posted in every classroom and on the Parent Communication Board.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to come to the center during the day to feed their child. Appropriate, private feeding locations will be made available. Please discuss your desire to come to the center to breastfeed your child with the classroom teacher and director.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Minimum Standards 746.501(26)

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Our employees are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behaviors, or conditions prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. As mandated reporters, our employees cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, or season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g., car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol

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- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit http://www.hhs.texas.gov /I_Am/parents.asp or <http://www.getparentingtips.com>

The statewide Abuse & Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

It is the policy of the school to comply with applicable laws regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect and to cooperate with government investigations of suspected abuse and neglect. You agree that we may also honor a request from government authorities to interview your child at school regarding an investigation into suspected abuse or neglect.

Health Checks

Our employees will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a teacher or director notices anything unusual they are required to point this out to the parent at that time. If your child has an accident overnight, please notify teacher and director when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects. Our teachers may complete an “Incident Report” to document these situations.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

All employees are encouraged to receive an annual flu shot and any pertinent vaccinations, but this is not a requirement by our school.

Adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act

Our policy is to accept children in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), its regulations, and any other applicable local, state, or federal laws pertaining to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. We review each child’s needs on a case-by-case basis and can make reasonable accommodations for any child who can safely participate in a group care environment. Please discuss your child’s needs with the school Director before you enroll. If you have additional information or documentation of your child’s needs, just let us know. Having it helps us to provide the best possible care for your child. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the enrollment or care of your child with special needs, please contact your school Director.

Gang-Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a licensed childcare center is a gang free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.

Pre-Enrollment Requirements

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the center's office 3 business days prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file. This is per our licensing regulations. If you have chosen not to have your child immunized; a notarized waiver form must be obtained by a physician.

Immunizations may be waived for certain reasons. Please discuss this with the school Director to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a wavier on file in place of an immunization record, so that the center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations.

All children are required to have a Physician's Statement form filled out by a licensed medical professional to attend our school. The Physician's Statement Form, indicating the child's fitness to attend our school, must be completed by a licensed healthcare professional and returned to the school Director 3 business days before enrollment.

Court Orders Affecting Enrolled Children

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (ex... Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) We must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with our school administration, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. We cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, we suggest that the parents keep the child with them until a court order is issued. If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, we are obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order

and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. We will report any violations of these orders to the court.

Payments

Our tuition rates and other charges are set out in the Fee Schedule.

- **Payment Method** - All payments must be made via Tuition Express ACH using a checking account. Cash is not accepted. We reserve the right to modify applicable payment after notice. **Payment Deadline** for the week is due at the time your child is dropped off for school on Monday or the first day school is open for the week. If payment is not received by closing on Monday (or the first day school is open for the week if the school is closed on Monday), the **Late Payment Penalty** will be assessed. The child may be disenrolled for nonpayment. If a child is disenrolled for nonpayment, a new **Registration Fee** will be required before the child is eligible for re-enrollment.
- The school's **Weekly Tuition** and other charges may change from time to time, and in any event, annually. New **Weekly Tuition** and other charges are due when effective. Additional fees for field trips, special activities, and optional programs may apply and are due before the child participates in the relevant activity. Nonpayment of any amount when owed is a breach of this Agreement and may, at our discretion, may result in disenrollment.

Withdrawal

A two-week written notice to the Director of the school is required if you choose to permanently withdraw your child from school. If you withdraw your child without two weeks' notice, tuition will continue to be due, and you agree to pay the tuition for the two weeks following your child's last day of attendance, and your child will be unenrolled at the end of that two-week period.

Dress Code

Children

Clothing: Children are engaged in various activities during the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing. Parents are prohibited from dressing children in overalls, or clothing with difficult closures, and specific types of shoe wear (cowboy boots). These types of clothing present particular challenges for children in relation to toileting and safety. Coats must be provided in the winter months. Children are not permitted to wear open-toed and/or open backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

Pecan Ridge School
Parent Handbook

Children over 3 years of age are required to always have at least one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center. Children under 3 years of age are required to have at least two seasonably and size appropriate, complete changes of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change. All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, and scarves. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing. **Jewelry/Accessories:** Children are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind. It is a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. In addition, we will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables. It is the parents' responsibility to enforce this policy with their children.

Parents

Clothing: Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while at our school or involved in any sponsored events. Inappropriate clothing would include, revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited.

Parents wearing high heels, work boots, or shoes with wet/dirty soles, will be required to remove their shoes prior to entering any classroom with children under 1 year of age. This will reduce the risk of injury to a child on the floor and will help to maintain a clean floor. Parents can simply leave their shoes outside the classroom door prior to entering the classroom. Parents with bare feet must wear foot coverings/booties when entering the classroom.

Items from Home

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child.

Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

Your child should not bring candy, toys, or money from home.

All items must be labeled with the child's first name and last initial. Diapering creams/powders and sunscreen must be labeled with the child's full name.

Toddlers 2's 3's 4's Supplies

Parents will provide a blanket (full-time only)-blanket must be taken home every Friday for laundering.

One or more changes of clothing (which may include socks and shoes) labeled with child's first and last name in a Ziploc bag.

School's Right to Refuse Admission

We reserve the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause. Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
 2. The director deems the child too ill to attend.
 3. Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, employees, or other children enrolled at our school if the child were to be present at the center.
 4. Parents failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
 5. Parents failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
- Parents will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.

Smoke Free

Children shall be in a smoke free and tobacco free environment. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made or derived from tobacco, including e-cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, and hookah, are not permitted on the property of the childcare center, in vehicles used to transport children, or during any activities off school premises. The use of tobacco (including smokeless tobacco and vaping), illegal drugs, and alcohol is prohibited on our school campuses and during our school sponsored off-campus activities.

Parking Lot Safety

We are committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive environment for all people occupying our schools. Considering the significant risk posed by vehicle exhaust emissions, especially to children, we ask that vehicles in our parking lot avoid idling for any longer than 5 minutes. Vehicle exhaust is linked to increases in asthma, allergies, and heart and lung disease. Children are especially at risk because their lungs are still developing, and they inhale more air per pound of body weight than adults.

When entering and exiting school property parents should drive slowly and avoid distractions as young children are present while parents are loading and unloading children from their vehicles. Please have your radio sound at a low level also.

We cannot be held liable for damages that occur in our parking lot. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that their vehicle is secure before entering the building and that no valuable property such as purses or brief cases are left in plain sight. Please understand that it is your personal responsibility to be proactive with your vehicle and personal belongings. Our cameras will only monitor certain areas of the parking lot and could act as a deterrent to criminal activity. Our primary focus remains with your children and their safety within our school. Please be courteous and keep music level at a minimum in parking lot and at pick up/drop off.

Cameras and Photographs

We have closed circuit cameras in classrooms, hallways, outside areas, the lobby, and the parking lot that live stream video. Cameras are for surveillance purposes only.

We believe in the benefit of using real life pictures in our educational program. Photos taken of the children will be done with a school owned camera and will only be used in our program. If parents choose to take pictures of events held at our program, they may only photograph their child unless written permission is given by the other parent.

Please note during certain parent events, such as Pre-K graduation, Christmas programs, and Open House, photographs may be taken. If you wish for your child to not be photographed, you may want to remove them from these events.

Celebrations

Most children enjoy celebrating special events with their friends (birthdays, new babies, and holidays). Parents may send a “store bought”, nut-free treat to share with the class. Treats must be in the original store-bought packaging and are to be unopened. Please make arrangements with the teacher/Director three days in advance when planning a special occasion. We believe in inclusion and celebrating each child’s beliefs and important days. In the event that a parent does not want their child to participate in a holiday celebration, they may choose to keep their child home for that day. No reduction in fees or tuition will be given.

Holidays

Our school operates year-round, Monday through Friday. We will be closed for the following holidays.

- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King Birthday
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Our school may also close on other holidays, but we will notify Parents in advance of those closures. Because tuition rates and staffing needs are calculated on a weekly basis, tuition credits or refunds are not available for holidays or other unscheduled school closures.

Unexpected School Closures

If the school is required to close unexpectedly for inclement weather or other reasons before the school day begins, we will attempt to notify Parents in advance using our emergency plan and/or local news media. If the school is required to close unexpectedly during the school day, we will notify Parents and, if necessary, emergency contacts using available contact information. Please refer to the school's emergency plan for information regarding emergency pickup locations and information about our transportation in emergencies

Biting

We recognize that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 ½ year old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit or will bite another child. The teachers and directors understand that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the teacher is working to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The teacher will not punish or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with teachers and directors to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Uncooperative parents will have their child's care terminated. Children older than 3 years of age, may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the teacher will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with teachers and directors to help their child control this behavior. Uncooperative parents may have their child's care terminated. Furthermore, children, in the older age groups, who bite 3 times in a school year may have their care terminated since the safety of all the children in the program is of our utmost concern. Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The teacher and director may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed. Our employees cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

Screen Time

We do not allow children under five years of age to use any screens (iPad, tablet, computer, or phone) for any reason. Screen time for children over five years of age is limited to no more than 1 hour per day in compliance with the Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards; with the exception of school aged children who are utilizing a computer or tablet/iPad to complete school or homework assignments.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; fax to (202) 690-7442; or email to program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Parent Handbook Receipt Acknowledgement

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have received, have read, understand, and agree to the terms of the Parent Handbook. I understand that the Parent Handbook forms a part of our contract with our school and is a legally binding document. I understand that my child as well as each Parent/Guardian of child must comply with the Family Handbook.

Child(ren)'s Name(s)_____

Parent Signature_____

Date_____